ESSAYS ON INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

J. N. Mohanty

Edited with an introduction by
Purushottama Bilimoria

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This collection of essays by Professor J. N. Mohanty 'chart[s]... a sort of intellectual autobiography' and traces his reflections on Indian philosophy and a range of other issues, over a span of forty years. Part I deals with problems in metaphysics, epistemology, and language, along with thoughtful treatments of notions such as experience, self, consciousness, doubt, tradition, and modernity. Essays in Part II, written during the turbulent post-Independence years, survey issues in social ethics, reform activities, and religion, variously in the works of Aurobindo, Gandhi, Vinobha, and Rammohun Roy. Part III discusses the encounter between phenomenology and philosophy, between Indian and Western philosophy, through an incisive analysis of some major concerns of philosophy, anywhere. The collection ends with some thoughts on the future of Indian philosophy.

Those keen on keeping abreast with the 'other' interests and equally analytical reflections of one of the finest minds in contemporary phenomenology and philosophical currents, will find in these essays an invigorating and challenging thrust. The editor's substantial introduction followed by the author's own prologue set the scene for a stimulating read.

J. N. Mohanty is Professor of Philosophy, Temple University, Philadelphia and Woodruff Professor of Philosophy and Asian Studies, Emory University, Georgia.

Purushottama Bilimoria is Professor of Philosophy, Deakin University and Senior Research Fellow, Melbourne University, Australia.

'The essays in this collection are delightful reading... replete with argumentative skill.' — *The Book Review*

'Jitendra Mohanty triumphs because of his generosity of understanding and closeness to the voice of earth-bound man. This is the true Indian spirit of philosophy: an integral view of the Near and the Far, Being and Becoming, Today and Tomorrow.' — *The Hindu*

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What is Time, that the primodial must lose itself in the subsequent, and what is Truth, that it must ride on Time's fictitious arrow and can shine forth only on the ruins of a transcended past? What is thinking, that it does not permit the past to retain some treasure in reserve, making possible the arrival of the authentic future, and to Truth the mystery of concealment in the very moment of articulated disclosure?

J L Mehta (*India and the West: The Problem of Understanding*, Chico Press, California, 1980).

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Editor's Introduction
A fusion of disparate horizons

Professor J.N. Mohanty has lived a dual intellectual life; or so it appears from the perceptions of those who are familiar with Professor Mohanty's distinctive speciality and interests. Professor Mohanty's readers and admirers can be said to fall into two broad camps: one group is prone to pronounce that J.N. Mohanty is a reputable transcendental philosopher and a leading authority on Husserl's phenomenology; the other group will avouch that Dr Jitendra Mohanty is one of the leading Indian philosophers of our times, whose reputation goes back to the 1950s and 1960s when he injected much clarity and vigour into the discourse of philosophy in India (although his first book-length study was on the philosophy of Hartmann and Whitehead, published in Calcutta in 1957).

At times, paying attention to only one side of the divide, either camp remains (or professes to be) diffidently ignorant of what Professor Mohanty might be pursuing in his uninimical way in the other camp. (This divide is compounded by librarians who, as my own early searches for the writings of Professor Mohanty showed, seemed to think that the catalogue entries under 'Jitendranath... [in Indian prints] and with initialized forenames as 'J N Mohanty' [variously as Jitendra N., Jitendra Nath] referred to two quite different authors!). If hearing about a paper Professor Mohanty just presented on Foucault (as he did in Australia) brings expressions of surprise on the part of his American colleagues in one camp, imagine how much more amazed, or perplexed, they would again be to hear that shortly afterwards he talked on his personal appreciation of Vinoba Bhave to another group of academics.

Things would have been fine, and there would have been no clash of opinions or perceptions, but for the fact that this alleged

dualism is brought into question by Professor Mohanty himself. To drive home this quiddity, the philosopher–scholar repeatedly points to other dualities that he has struggled with throughout his intellectual life, and which cut right across the great divide just alluded to. Are there then two Professor Mohantys? Each utterly different and speaking incommensurable languages?

The answer to this conundrum is hinted at in the author's own Prologue, citing here a remark of a colleague of his: 'the two are non-different'. The dualism, then, is an illusion, a veritable *māyā*; perhaps the truth lies somewhere in the middle: the identity is circumscribed by *différance*; the dualism flounders in dissimulation. The purpose of the present collection of essays is to throw some light on the rather uneven characterization we began with, so that a more balanced picture may emerge.

Professor Mohanty is clearly a remarkable individual living in our times. Far from being any sort of a philosophical schizoid, he never sets out to reconcile, in either some slap-dash or a neat and tidy manner, the major strands or let us say traditions of philosophy that he has spent a large part of his adult life studying and imbibing. He takes them for what they each are: great systems of thought in their own right, encompassing a vast history and terrain of ideas, experiences, reflections, problems, self-understanding and aspirations. If there are discontinuities, one has to reckon with this, rather than filling in gaps in some superficial or wondrously strained ways. Rooted in their own peculiarly disparate histories, they may not even be the same kind of discourse, as Richard Rorty is wont to argue. (Haste in this matter, as we have learned bitterly from the flaws in certain forms of comparative studies, brings about unwarranted entanglements and confusions which later generations of scholars have to set about undoing.)

Each tradition would then—or ought we say, must perforce—appear different to an outsider, who looks upon it as the intellectual craft of the 'other' community of intellectuals. One of course has to be an 'insider' to understand and appreciate a tradition, and that may not be such an issue when one is born into it. But can one be an insider in another tradition one encounters or happens to stray into? More significantly, how can one be an insider in two traditions, or in two communities that may have very little in common with each other? (And, of course, this matter is not be prejudged until

one is sufficiently inside the other tradition.) Suppose for now that one somehow manages to gain privy to and succeeds in immersing oneself, and therefore becoming an insider in the other tradition as well. But could this not leave one in a rather precarious situation in regard to one's original roots? Has one now stepped outside, and is therefore a stranger or an intruder upon one's own tradition? And would that be such a bad idea, or an odd situation to be in? Besides, is access always a proclivity of the so-called insider—without excess?

Suppose now, the intrepid traveller decides to 'assimilate' himself completely to the formerly other tradition, even becomes a spokerperson for it. But then, it would seem, he would have very flimsy grounds for claiming any longer to be an insider in respect of the tradition he has left behind. Yet, paradoxically and in reality, he is no more an outsider to this (his former) tradition *than* he is an insider to that other tradition. This paradox nonetheless can be turned into a positive gain, though not without its own anguish and tensions, as the following rhetorical query in Professor Mohanty's account poignantly reveals: 'Where do I stand, then, at what place, from where I could be an outsider for both—and also an insider?'

Note closely that the phenomenological *angst* in the first instance is about how he can optimally be an *outsider* 'for both', not just about being an *insider*, although that too. Anthropologists in recent times have worried themselves for falling short of being 'insiders' to the cultures and traditions of the 'primitives', the 'others'—the subjects in their alterity who they have taken to studying—for reasons of inaccessibility, intranslatability, and the historical specificity and particularity of the 'life-world' of each community. However, the anxiety that Professor Mohanty expresses is not quite that, but is about locating an overlapping contour in which he can be both an outsider as well as an insider. The common denominator, it follows, is not in some privileged access that he is now able to have or claim to have, or desires to have, to both the traditions. In other words, it is not in being an insider *per se*, but rather in the dynamics of *fusion* of the outsider with the insider and, again, the insider with the outsider, that now looms on the horizons, in a repose of detachment. (The term *fusion* as used here is from Gadamer's famous phrase: 'fusion of horizons'; and it perhaps echoes the mythology, with its own significance, of the sangam

or confluence of Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī). It is curiously a meeting of oneself with oneself as the 'other' and in another space. Together, they return to the former place (*topos/āśrya*) to didactically become one again. But this one-becoming is really no point of return, for there is no intention to reclaim the originary impressions, for any such pretense will have been bracketed by the process of phenomenological reduction or *epoché*. There is now a vision, a sight, that goes a little beyond what was in its place. Let us call it a sustained transcendental *darśana*. ('Transcendental' not in the sense of a mind/soul/spirit spatially or temporally removed, but in the sense of a dispassionate, self-reflexively reflective, participant-observation shifting through meaning-structures for the essence.). A major advantage of this *darśana* or 'in-sight' (as against the classical model) is that it enables the inquirer to be self-consciously critical while being empathetically receptive to the views and positions championed on either side. And thus, as this approach is commented upon in the Prologue: '[T]o aim at thinking from within two traditions is possible, although it has been a deeply disturbing experience'.

The possibility of being simultaneously immersed in and yet reflectively apart from two traditions, then, is attested to in the intellectual profile of a sterling thinker who embodies—as though by dint of destiny—just such a mood for 'interface' and complementarity in his philosophical orientation. And moreover, this feat also, in the author's view, refutes relativism across the broader discourse rampant in our age; for it confirms, for him at least, the 'unity of rational thinking—which though remains a goal (rather than a given) that a philosopher has to relentlessly strive towards.

The present collection of essays, although not written with that purpose in mind, implicitly argues a case for this interface; and in itself it might even be exemplary. At the least, it continues the conversation towards that most difficult and worthy of objectives that philosophy, in all ages and wherever, behoves itself to.

It has been my good fortune and an honour to have been associated with this project. In the process I have come to learn a lot. Apart from deepening my own understanding of certain philosophical problems, I have learnt some other things too, such as, about the virtues of humility and self-effacement, about the workings of a transcendental ego (in contrast to an ostentatious personal ego), and the kind of reflectively astute, disciplined yet flexible mind that

a philosopher can develop through prolonged and sustained pondering on a set of problems and questions, during which nothing—no creeds, no dogmas, no orthodoxies, no unquestioned presuppositions or assumptions and biases—would remain unturned. It is not difficult to see this develop in the works of Professor Mohanty; and one cannot help but feel it resonate in his presence.

This volume confines itself to just some of his writings on Indian philosophy, and so any further comments must be circumspect to this area of inquiry, made in the context, nevertheless, of the further horizon it reaches out towards. But first a few remarks of a biographical nature about the author would seem apposite, for that too may throw further light on the circumstances surrounding the makings of a philosopher who in some interesting ways stands up as something of a solid force in the contemporary ambience of what at times looks to be rather confusing and mutually opposed sheafs of the philosophic *lebensweltt*.

Professor Mohanty was born on 26 September 1928, in Cuttack in Orissa, India. His early education took place in Cuttack before moving on to Presidency College in Calcutta in 1945, where he first studied philosophy—both Western and Indian. It is here that philosophical problems first gripped him, and began to transform him, no doubt to be transformed themselves along the way. On the loftier side, a concern of paramount importance that impressed upon the young scholar as also his colleagues, was whether it was Śaṁkara or Sri Aurobindo who held the key to the metaphysical problem, to whit: 'Are the world and finite individual illusory or real?' The other concern had a more practical bearing, in the ambit of the Indian freedom movement and the radicalization of Indian intellectuals, for it presented the choice between Marx and Gandhi: 'What is the more effective means of bringing about social change, violence or non-violence?' Marxism had, of course, arrived in India in a few second-hand and gabbled variations, while Gandhism was there to be heard first-hand from the Mahatma himself during his addresses and prayer-meetings in Bengal and elsewhere. Keen to resolve this dilemma, the anxious philosophy undergraduate was deeply moved by Gandhi's mediations between Hindus and Muslims. After listening to the sermons of the Mahatma he become convinced that *means and ends* must be utterly consistent, that the desirable end is simply not sufficient to justify any and sundry means. Hence

he reasoned that non-violence was ultimately the more effective means to social transformation, which India seemed desperately to be in need of; or so the nineteenth century nationalist and modernist leaders since Rammohan Roy and Vivekananda's days had been telling a young India moving into the twentieth century. To be sure, it was not simply a question of choice, rather it was one of a dialectical equilibrium between persuaded change and enforced change, especially where the forces offer unprecedented resistence, whether this be of foreign (imperialistic), or of indigenous (orthodox) origins. *Praxis* or action based on a theoretical/ideological conviction is never discounted. Nor does non-violence amount to a mere relapse into complacency, or worse, a condescension to cowardice, as Gandhi, following his reading of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Mahābhārata*, as also by his own example, was to illustrate.

Independence finally arrived, as did also the partition and the painful moments the events led to. Young Jitendra Mohanty graduated and moved on to Calcutta University for postgraduate studies. These were philosophically more spectacular days for there were some powerful intellects he was to encounter and who would make a deep impression on him. Notable among these philosophers were, Nalini Kanta Brahman and Yogendranāth Tarkavedāntatīrtha (under whom the Śaṁkara system was studied), Rash Vihari Das (with whom Kant's *First Critique* was studied), and Kalidas Bhattacharyya (whose influence on a whole generation or two of philosophers in the subcontinent is too well known to rehearse here).

A Masters degree was earned in 1949, the year young Mohanty also chanced upon a copy of Boyce Gibson's translation of Husserl's *Ideen I (Ideas)*. Husserl, *in absentia*, we might say, proved to be an encounter of a third philosophical kind. For it was Husserl, along with Whitehead and Hartmann, who first suggested to the budding intellect the possibility of a presuppositionless and descriptive philosophy. It was this growing preoccupation that led Mohanty to abandon his law studies (which were nearing completion), probably much to the chagrin of his father, a lawyer of some repute, who by now was on the bench of the High Court in Cuttack. Shortly afterwards, Mohanty left for Göttingen in Germany.

At Göttingen Mohanty studied mathematics, and worked on Vedic Sanskrit with the German philologist Ernest Waldschmidt. These were also philosophically adventurous days, for here the

thoughts of many of the great German thinkers were to be encountered afresh, not least of Heidegger (whose lecture he attended) and, of course, of the late Husserl (from whose former home, the author nonchalantly recalls, he lived only a minute's walk away). Heidegger's lectures and writings were challenging in their own right, even as Heidegger deviated from and developed further certain salient features of phenomenology which Husserl had originally thought out. The deepest impact on Mohanty to be borne out in years to come, however, was that of Husserl. Meanwhile, his wife, Mrs Bani Mohanty (née Chatterjee) bore the burden of his long absence abroad; and his father, who also had to bear the same burden, passed away. A corollary to this small family narrative is that his mother, who stayed on in Orissa, wrote to him with an astounding regularity of about once a week, and the letters followed him again when he moved abroad until her last days. She passed away at her village home in Cuttack in 1989. These were sorrowful moments, as they must be for one whose concern it was, along with all the bag of philosophical problems, to keep simply and humbly in touch with the soil on which he was born.

After gaining his doctrate and upon return to India in 1954, Dr Mohanty did not immediately enter the halls of academe. Instead, he chose to embark on a self-searching spiritual journey, which people like Gandhi had done previously. While in Germany he had heard about the noble efforts of Vinoba Bhave (the spiritual heir to Gandhi) in relation to his *bhoodān* ('land-gifts') movement. He was attracted by this idea but wondered if the program really worked, and so decided to join Vinoba on his *padayātră* across India. This he did and walked with Vinoba for a whole year, peripatetically engaging the sage in regular philosophical conversations. In this journey he was to see and experience India through the eyes of the socially concerned and not simply skimp at it from the window of the intellectual ivory tower. The experiences from this unusual though challenging undertaking by any standards for a professional philosopher were to become subject for reflection for many years afterwards. From these intermittent reflections and continuing internal dialectic between modes of traditional thinking and the rationalism of modernity, resulted numerous articles on the modern figures whose pronouncements were at least as philosophically significant and perhaps morally binding as those of the ancients.

Thus there were reflections on the renascent revival of religion as exemplified in Rammohan Roy's thought; on Gandhi's concepts of humankind and truth for their ethical bearing; on Aurobindo's idea of the ideal social ordering; on Vinoba's motivation for the *bhoodān* movement and his attitude towards science in contradistinction to Gandhi's more conservative outlook, and so on. (Incidently, there was also a single exchange of letters, again on a rather contentious philosophical issue, with the sage-philosopher in Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo.) This marked a phase of writing on pressing moral and spiritual issues of the day, to be picked up again in other, more theoretical, ways in his later years.

Shortly after the pilgrimage with Vinoba, Dr Mohanty took up a teaching post with the Graduate School of the University of Calcutta, where he taught philosophy from 1955 to 1960. The next two years were spent teaching Indian philosophy in the Research Department of Sanskrit College. For a short while he was the Vivekananda Professor and Head of Philosophy in Burdwan University (where he taught with his colleague and close friend, Sibajiban Bhattacharyya). He returned again to Calcutta University, now as the Acharya B.N. Seal Professor of Mental and Moral Science in the Department of Philosophy, a clear sign-post to a distinguished career which continued until 1970. During these years, alongside an intense study of Navya-nyāya with a traditional *pandit*, there continued detailed work on Husserl and Kant and a study of the Anglo-American analytic school. This also led towards an interest in Frege and how he compared with Husserl (since Frege, of a more analytical temperament, had reviewed a key early work by Husserl). Curiously enough Professor Mohanty was at this stage more interested in pursuing these systems from within each tradition, even if they would lead to distinctly different ends. However, it soon became evident that the very problems in Western thought—for example, the nature of the *given*, the relation between 'meaning' and 'truth', the role of 'content' in knowledge, sense and reference, theory and practice, subjectivity and objectivity, subject and person—where equally the problems that commanded his attention in the texts of Indian philosophy as well. His 1960s addresses to the Indian Philosophical Association and the Indian Philosophical Congress (of which he was made President in 1961; and again in 1986), were replete with references to these problems in Western and Indian

philosophy, and they show a keen mind at work attempting to resolve these problems, as if by the same stroke in both the traditions. (Although, it was never anything like the positivists' reduction, say, of the problem of mind in Western philosophy and the Upaniṣadic doctrine of *ātman*, unilaterally to a fundamental linguistic confusion about our ordinary discourse.) Again, the roots of the comparative dialectic that was to flourish and flower in later works were planted here.

But it was not simply this 'comparative' interest that kept him in touch with classical Indian philosophy. As we mentioned, Mohanty continued a separate and intense study of Navya-nyāya logic especially of Gaṅgeśa and his commentators, with his mentor of some twelve years during this period, namely, Ananta Kumar Tarkatīrtha. Something intrinsically grabbed his interest in Nvaya-nyāya: perhaps it was its brilliant analysis of cognitions in their logical aspects, just as the Vedānta texts illuminated (as if by *svaprakāśatā*) from within their magnificent Sanskrit aphorisms, the manifold modalities of consciousness. Out of this study was born the now celebrated *Gaṅgeśa's Theory of Truth* (1966). Professor Bimal K. Matilal (another close associte from Sanskrit College years), reviewing this work in 1968 (*Philosophy East & West* no. 18, 1968, pp. 321–33) commended the author for the perspicuity, clarity and breadth with which he had handled such a large and difficult question in Indian epistemology. Indeed, the work has become something of a landmark and an example of how the philosophical problem on the nature and relation of knowledge and truth in the Indian tradition might be approached in deference to its comparable treatment in the best segments of Western philosophy. In a seminar held in 1984 (at an SACP symposium in the American Association of Philosophy, Eastern Division meeting), to re-appraise the question of *prāmāṇya* (validity/legitimation) and, in particular, *Gaṅgéśa's Theory of Truth*, Professor Karl Potter, made the following opening remarks:

> In my opinion the most outstanding exposition of Indian thinking on the topic of *prāmāṇyavāda* is to be found in the work of Jitendranath Mohanty, and most notably in his ground-breaking book, *Gaṅgeśa's Theory of Truth (GTT).*

After highlighting the exemplary fashion in which the author of

GTT had separated, teased out, elucidated, translated and critiqued the variegated positions in the classical polemic concerning a number of issues, especially whether the *prāmāṇya* of cognition (*jñāna*) is *svataḥ* ('self-validating') or *parataḥ* ('other-validating'), Potter went on to characterize the work in its entirety as a 'tour de force, a subtle, critical illumination of the most intricate kind of material calling for that rare combination, brilliance as Indologist and philosopher rolled into one'. (*Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 12, 1984, 307–27).

True to his quiet dignity, Mohanty bracketed the adulation and set about responding to the criticisms aired at the symposium to a work he had admittedly written some twenty years ago. Nonetheless, he was not averse to reconsidering his position, as indeed he had over the years and as is evident from his ensuing writings. Lest these criticisms pass unanswered he promptly revised the *GTT*, thanking the participants at the symposium for bringing his earlier shortcomings to his more mature attention. The revised edition with his response in the Appendix was recently issued from Delhi.

In 1967 Mohanty accepted a Fulbright Visiting Professorship in the University of Oklahoma in the United States. He returned to India in 1968 (with a short visit to Romania as the Government of India's Cultural Representative), and continued teaching in Calcutta University. The much-noted Indian career culminated in his elevation as General President of the Indian Philosophical Association, in Bombay in 1968. And this timely recognition was capped by his nomination to life-membership of the Indian Academy of Philosophy in Calcutta. But he was not to remain in India for much longer; drawn as he was, once again, to the United States in early 1970, where he has remained since. He joined and served for one-and-a-half decades the Department of Philosophy in the University of Oklahoma as the George Lynn Cross Research Professor of Philosophy. A few short years in between were spent at the New School for Social Research in New York as Aron Gurwitsch's successor; it was possibly the hectic pace of the metropolis rather than its philosophical activities that made him decide to return to the rolling hills of Norman, Oklahoma. When I first visited Professor Mohanty, that was in 1981 in Oklahoma, he seemed quite settled and comfortable staying on in Oklahoma, despite numerous offers and requests that came his way to lead a department of philosophy,

or some research institute, in other parts of North America and in India. More recently, Mohanty moved to Temple University in Philadelphia as a leading Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, serving also as its Chairman for three years.

The last two decades coinciding with Professor Mohanty's stay in America were virtually given over to a deepening of interest and critical work in the area of contemporary European philosophy and especially phenomenology, which hitherto, in India, was an almost solitary pursuit for him. His 1964 publication of the near-definitive *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning* (The Hague: Nijhoff), was already well in circulation in the English-speaking intellectual world. Spurred on by an active and near-ripe environment for an emergent American interest in European philosophy, Professor Mohanty was able to make notable and much-acclaimed contributions towards developing a better understanding of Husserlian phenomenology, an enriched thesis of transcendental subjectivity, and a self-critical, phenomenological version of transcendental philosophy. Intellectually, then, by this stage he was fully immersed in the European philosophical tradition; what attachments he had to the Indian tradition might have been reduced to vestiges of his former emotional and spiritual links with India. This might seem obvious from the titles of the major works that resulted form his studies in these years, such as *Phenomenology and Ontology* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970) *The Concept of Intentionality* (St Louis: Warren Green, 1971), followed by book length studies of Kant, Frege and Husserl, critical thoughts on the Human Sciences, and books on Transcendental Philosophy and Transcendental Phenomenology. (The Bibliography in this volume should give a better indication of the extent of this involvement.) When one is caught up in one tradition of argumentation it is often difficult to come out of it and enter or re-enter another.

But the gloss just sketched is not exactly true of Professor Mohanty's philosophical orientation in these years. There was more than the usual emotional and spiritual connection retained with India. For one, he was actively in touch with the leading philosophers in India and contributed to their discussions, in writing if not always in person. A glance at the date and place of publication of several of the essays in this volume (and elsewhere) should corroborate this fact. Furthermore, his intuitions from Indian thought played not

just a meagre or passing role in his endeavour to expound his understanding of European–Western philosophical and, we might add, religious discourse; rather, these intuitions interceded to present insights of a more fundamental kind, to inform and deepen the process of thought, and in turn to refract back on the tradition itself from whose fount of wisdom he had drunk. A few instances may be cited that evince this dialectial process at work.

The discussion of the relation of phenomenology and ontology does not go through without copious treatment of the problem of ontology, doubt and perception in Nyāya. A whole large work on *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy* (Nijhoff, 1985) breaks into a conundrum raised by Vācaspati commenting on Śaṁkara on the logic of enquiry, and it draws liberally on the Advaita conception of consciousness, as re-articulated by Kalidas Bhattacharyya (to whom, not an insignificant aside, the book is dedicated). Unable to resist references to the older history of Buddhist nominalist and generally Indian ontology of mental events in the context of Rorty's critique of Cartesian mentalism, the author pauses and wonders whether it might not be preposterous to bring on 'such an extraneous point as oriental thought'. He answers himself (or perhaps Rorty's unasked question), that it is made extraneous only if we restrict philosophy to the 'conversation of the West' (p. 64). This theme of restricting the history of philosophy to the conversations of a 'motley crowd of jarring beliefs and ideologies', and legitimating the judgement of the 'end of philosophy' by refering back to this history, is taken up again in Mohanty's most recent work in this genre of the concerns with the 'transcendental' (philosophically understood), namely, *Transcendental Phenomenology: An Analytic Account* (Blackwell, 1989), which is by far his most decisive statement in the field of enquiry to date. The book concludes with the rhetorical but poignant question: '[W]hich history, and whose history is it, to which, we are asked, in a spirit of illusory radicalness, to hand over the dissolution of problems that one does not have the courage to think through?' (p. 160).

Although the overt references in it to Indian philosophy as such might be scant by comparison and brought in only where most pertinent (e.g. contrasting the Husserlian idea of an 'active' transcendental ego with the 'passive' pure subjectivity of Sāṁkhya-Vedānta *ātman* principle), the book as a whole speaks as much to Indian

philosophers as it does to its primary audience of Western philosophers. For in this and such earlier works Mohanty develops his own position, arguably tempered by Husserlian phenomenology, that consciousness is intrinsically intentional, temporal and reflexive; that consciousness is constitutive of and constituted by the concrete experience-of-the-world in all its modalities and in its historicity; and that the idea of transcendental subjectivity cannot be reduced to a mere psychological or 'mental' state of the individual nor to a unitary, intentionless, pure and absolute principle as attempted in Advaita Vedānta-Sāṁkhya metaphysics (although the parallels are excitingly pursued here). Both the tendencies of a pure naturalistic ontology and a pristine spiritual (or extreme subjectivist) metaphysics appear to him to be flawed. That he might have deviated from 'the classical Hindu' position and submitted to an overbearing Western influence on his thinking, as some of his Indian colleagues maintain (not always publicly), simply begs the issue at point: should not a philosopher be free to think in any tradition he so wishes to, or finds affinity with, and should he not be free also to critique the positions of his own tradition from his learning in other traditions? Provided, of course, that a balance of perspective can be maintained and the extraneous influences, if that is what they are, do not strain the reading and understanding or re-appraising of the former tradition, why should this endeavour be seen as if it were going against the current of tradition? This could also, indeed, be a way of bringing out the distinctiveness of the Indian tradition *qua* its *Indianness*.

To try one's best to 'understand' a tradition does not entail that one cannot also be a critic of that tradition; although, in order to be a critic of one's own tradition, admittedly, one needs, in some measure, to transcend it—while, still, as a person belonging to it. What one needs to find is 'an archimedean point' outside of it. But as Gadamer has rightly argued it is an illusion to think that such an ideal point actually exists. The best one can do under the circumstances is to maintain some critical distance from it. But how to maintain this critical distance while attempting to understand as intimately as possible a tradition (society, text or person) confronting one has been, as we said earlier, Mohanty's anxiety throughout, and it is an issue to which he remains most sensitive (p. 146). What might complicate the issue, or perhaps even cloud it for some, is his insistence, here following Gadamer again, that there is no such

thing as a given, unaltered and unalterable or immutable tradition (unless it is utterly static and fossilized); and that a tradition is both the medium of interpretation and self-understanding of a community as well as the anonymous sedimentation of the on-going process of interpretation. In other words, tradition is the ground of the interpretations but it is also *constituted* in the process of these interpretations. A tradition does not stand outside the matrix of interpretations, in both its constitution as in its subsequent appropriation or self-understanding.

Thus, to interpret, to understand, to critique a tradition, is not simply achieved by gazing upon it as though it were an objective artifact. Rather, one has to be 'in it' and 'out of it', while recognizing that one's own interpretation, whether it be prejudice, prejudgement, open judgement, contributes to the continuous formation, re-articulation, perhaps even inventing (as with the nineteenth century romanticism in India) of that very tradition. Is this approach to tradition, one may ask, simply a corollary of the long and hardened influence of historicism (i.e. the theory about the inescapable historicity of a culture, its self-understanding and transmission) championed from Hegel to Gadamer? Could it be that Professor Mohanty might have succumbed to the sway of this theory, while still, in other respects, looking for the essentially ahistorical, presuppositionless, prejudiceless, even a priori grounds of all understanding, for which he took the turn to transcendental phenomenology, prefigured in his earlier attraction to Platonic essentialism and 'ideal unities'? The two quests seem to pull in contrary directions. The reader will find in the essays that follow that Mohanty, in different ways and in seemingly different contexts, continually raises both aspects of this question, and he also pits them against each other. One might come away with the impression (as a philosopher-friend did after the IPC Presidential Address of 1986 in Jadavpur), that Mohanty tilts more towards the former quest when he is dealing with the broader discourses of understanding, such as culture and tradition, in particular scripture (*śāstra*), sanctioned orthodoxy (with their hope of fulfilment in some transcendental utopia), while in dealing with the more specialized or apparently decisive, mathematical, logical and phenomenological discourses (with their hopes of the fulfilment of rationalism), his bias tends more towards the latter, essentialist possibilities. But perhaps this impression is false also,

or is overstretched, for this suggests the polarities or dichotomies of tradition and modernity, speculative cosmology and analytic reason, which Mohanty has struggled to resolve or overcome in his own cautious way. One thing is clear, the world does not divide easily into one or the other side of the crucial philosophical question raised here (or, perhaps, as Kant said, the world is ambiguous). This question is (being) amply and diligently worked through in Mohanty's writings. One can hope for more clarity and precise answers in the writings to come.

Let us set aside this issue for a moment and press on with related matters. We came to this issue by way of remarking on Professor Mohanty's interest and work in phenomenology and in Western philosophy in general, the point of which was to show that there is no absolute separation of Indian and Western philosophy in the work of whom Kalidas Bhattacharyya has called 'one of the finest thinkers and scholars of the present day', acknowledging also the originality of Professor Mohanty's handling of contemporary Indian philosophy as of its counterpart in the West. ('My Reaction', *The Philosophy of Kalidas Bhattacharyya*, Daya Krishna, ed., Indian Philosophical Quarterly Publication 9, Poona, 1985, p. 202). Indeed, the veteran Kalidas Bhattacharyya, a long-time mentor to Mohanty, acknowledges having sat, in a manner of speaking, at the feet of this close student of his for his first lessons in phenomenology and neo-Kantian philosophy (even though Kalidas' own philosopher-father, Krishna Chandra Bhattacharyya, was every bit a self-made phenomenologist, India's counterpart to Husserl and curiously contemporaneous too). When all is said and done, Professor Mohanty resists being slotted into any neat philosophical pigeon-hole, for he never felt constrained by or limited to a 'School', but rather felt open to other possibilities, as long as these other possibilities were grounded in concrete 'experiences' of the world, the life-world, with all its contingencies. Thus, the geographical epithets 'Oriental', 'Western', as also the 'political' labels 'Analytical', 'Continental-European', lose their polarization in his thinking; the walls come down.

Apart from bringing to light numerous hidden vistas and theories of Indian philosophy, Professor Mohanty has also played a role in engendering studies in areas that might not have been taken seriously or so earnestly otherwise. Indeed, he has provoked scholars in the

field into thinking about certain areas which had been, and would have remained buried under the weight of orthodoxy, or accepted uncritically and with self-assured complacency. I will mention only two such instances here. One concerns theory of meaning, the other, *śabdapramāṇa*.

Some time back Professor Mohanty suggested that a Fregean theory of sense was absent in Indian semantics, that Indian semantical theories are basically referential. He has been unrepentant about this conviction in some ways, although he has been prepared to recognize a theory of sense in Indian semantics which is closer to Husserl's understanding of it than it is to the Fregean *Sinn*. In other words, he rejects that the sense-reference distinction as we have it in Frege is to be found in Indian philosophy, for the simple reason that the Fregean *Sinn* belongs to a different ontological dimension and is to be distinguished from particular concrete or abstract objects of reference, as also from internal structures of cognitive episodes. Numerous scholars have since produced remarkable studies in their own ways in response to this charge. Some of these alternate accounts are cited in essays dealing with *pramāṇa* and *śabda* in this volume.

As regards the doctrine of *śabdapramāṇa* to which is aligned the traditional claims about the authority of the Vedas *qua Śrutiprāmāṇyam* and its alleged authorlessness (*apauruṣeyatva*), Professor Mohanty initially had a great deal of difficulty with it. For, this claim to *śabda*'s being a *pramāṇa* does not, prima facie at least, square up with his understanding of the general theory of *pramāṇa* as a theory of rationality; if anything, *śabdapramāṇa*, and especially, the doctrine of Śruti, appear to dispense with reason altogether in the interest of the 'wisdom' of tradition, the testimony of the elders (whoever they might be), the 'heard word' passed on from times immemorial, and so on. Indeed, the logicality and rationality of the Navya-nyāya analysis of cognition seemed to find little echo in this doctrine to which however the Naiyāyikas also remained committed. Any thinking person should find this as a rather odd and puzzling situation, or simply an anolmaly that had to be set aside for sunnier days. But the effect was the opposite. Professor Mohanty did consider the doctrine. However he, perhaps all too summarily, rejected the doctrine of *śabda* as an epistemologically viable thesis: although he granted it an ethical worth, in terms of *śabda*'s (or better, Śruti's) role in informing a community of what it 'ought' to do (echoing

here the Kantian distinction between 'is' [descriptive] and 'ought' [imperative] statements).

Now and then, however, he would return to reconsider the *śabdapramāṇa* thesis and attempt to see it in more sanguine light. But these were overtures more than an attempt at a systematic analysis or argumentation of the problematical nature of the claim embodied in this thesis, the situation remained more or less the same for some fifteen years since he first pronounced on the doctrine. The debate on *śabda* in the wider community of Indian philosophers also, perhaps as a consequence of this strong rejection, remained somewhat muffled. However, in the early 1980s there was a marked change in his attitude as he began to ponder on the relation between modernity and tradition, in the wake of widespread doubts, in European philosophical quarters, and a call for rethinking on the question of modernity with its roots in the Enlightenment, reinforced by a more sympathetic note towards the ideas of tradition that reverberated in Gadamer's work, largely in the shadows of Hegel and Heidegger. Thus, in an essay on 'Between Tradition and Modernity' Mohanty made the following perceptive remarks:

> [T]he theory of *śabda pramāṇa*, indeed as the one mode of knowing which can override all others, needs to be looked at afresh. It is here that tradition and modernity come headlong into conflict. Even if it is true that the life-world does not fully determine the philosophical problems, it nevertheless appears that for a people whose faith in the infallibility of the scriptures is considerably weakened... *śabdapramāṇa* cannot any longer provide the theoretical basis for a satisfactory philosophy. But that is *not* to reject *śabda* altogether as *pramāṇa*. What is necessary is to re-examine the priorities and relative strengths and weaknesses... But one also needs to recall the distinction between understanding a sentence *p* and knowing *p*, the *different ways* in which language is central to cognitive enterprise and to normal and religious life, and the problems connected with the notions of a text and its interpretations. The methodological insights would, I believe, rehabilitate the tradition's self-understanding, without returning to the naive use of *śabdapramāṅa* to which a return is just impossible.

These are powerful words, and their impact has not worn thin in the years since they were published. Younger scholars who came to this field from a background in both Western and Indian philosophies took up (or had pre-empted) this caveat as a challenge

and set about re-considering the theory, first by returning to the texts to find and present a clear and faithful articulation of just what the theory involved and, secondly, by analysing the doctrine with reference to cognate theories in other systems and philosophies and, thirdly, by proffering a philosophical defence that harboured neither a sectarian commitment nor a prejudgement about the matter in question. The present writer for one, in a work devoted to this doctrine, questioned the distinction between 'understanding *p*' and 'knowing *p*' on which much of Professor Mohanty's counterargument seemed to have been based. And the writer has argued, one hopes convincingly, that the distinction, at least in the context of *śabda-pramāṅa*, does not hold and therefore the resistance offered to the thesis should be softened if not given up altogether.

Others too have argued that *śābdabodha* in a rather literal sense is 'knowing' and not just understanding, although it need not follow that all knowing *qua śābdabodha* need necessarily be *ipso facto pramā* or 'true' knowledge; some knowing (construed in the broadest possible sense, e.g. as judgement) can be false, some (e.g. as belief) simply trivial. But the simple distinction between belief, judgement and knowledge (on which, say, the classic Justified True Belief theory so heavily depends), does not hold in Indian epistemology, hence the emphasis on *pramāṇa* which not only provides, as the far as the theory goes, the instrument for coming to 'know' something but also provides legitimation to that particular apprehension or grasping. Perhaps here too, one suspects a tinge of conservatism or over-sensitivity to the problems of language and knowledge and particularly their relation as these come to be raised in Western philosophy. Along with 'intuition' (in more common parlance), *śabda* has popularly been hailed as a quintessential way of knowing in the majority of the Indian philosophical systems; even the detractors half-admit to the legitimacy of their own system on account of the testimony of their founding teachers or the enlightened ones. To the credit of the tradition Mohanty points out that no other culture made understanding based on verbal-textual source so central a part of its formal philosophical apparatus and its own self-understanding.

This debate, however, is still going on and is likely to go on for a very long time to come, even as Western philosophers are becoming interested in the classical (Western) doctrine of Testimony as a means of knowledge which for too long had been confined to the

garret. The credit for stimulating, nay, for provoking modern interest in its Indian counterpart, and in its comparative analysis, rests in a large measure with Professor Mohanty.

More challenging and in some ways troubling, however, has been Mohanty's reading and interpretation of the notion of Śruti. He renders Śruti as the 'eminent texts of the tradition', and *apauruṣeya* as the self-effacing delimitation of the horizon within which the Hindu tradition itself, and within which, Hindus understanding themselves'. To elucidate this unorthodox (by Brāhmaṇical benchmark at least) interpretation he invokes Hegel's notions of *Sittlichkeit* and *Moralität*, and draws on Gadamer's thinking on 'tradition', as the medium of cultural transmission of values, mores, customs, techniques and actions as well as its own self-understanding up to that historical moment. And so the discovery of the meaning of a tradition is never ever finished; it is, as Gadamer would say, an infinite process. Thus to claim any degree of finality for the authority of Śruti that orthodoxy would seem to want to [for one who decries this would be called *nāstika*], must, on this account, be deemed to be a misguided understanding of what tradition is.

To be sure, Mohanty would agree with Gadamer that not all authority is bad or wrong, that the way to handle the issue of tradition is not to reduce it univocally to a set of antiquated and anachronistic beliefs, nor to blindly expropriate its apparently fading spirituality, but rather to enter it, empathetically interact with it and in its dialectic allow a fresh understanding to emerge. Indeed, the distance that time and history (diachronic and synchronic) creates between a thinker or interpreter and the tradition provides an ideal setting for the hermeneutic reflection as it were to happen. For one can then, in retrospection, take into account the totality of past interpretations, and therefore more easily contextualize the tradition *qua* its representative ('eminent') texts to the present set of conditions and circumstances.

Again, there have been vehement disagreements over Mohanty's rather eclectic way of handling this matter. The underlying suspicion has been that, at best, the imported reductive categories do not augur well for an authentic appraisal of the Indian tradition and that, at worst, they ring an uncanny note of the confined Oriental condition or 'national spirit' which Hegel was only too keen to impose on Asiatic (and other non-European) cultures in order to

complete his grand narrative of world-history progressively moving towards the complete self-knowledge or absolute self-cosnsciousness on the part of the Spirit (*Geist*). Also, the Gadamerian thesis on 'tradition', which draws on Heidegger's hermeneutical fore-structures, and utilized in Professor Mohanty's discourse, has yet to satisfactorily answer several objections which Habermas among others bring to it. The principal objection being that, if understanding is anticipatory, that is, what we understand is framed by the structure of our 'pre-judices' (*Vorurteile*), and if one dispenses with a *critical*, meta-hermeneutic awareness throughout, then the thesis threatens to legitimate all 'prejudices' and opens up the Pandora's Box once again to relativism. Habermas believes that Gadamer's thesis is not sufficiently sensitive to elements of ideology or the systematic distortion of cultural transmission and communication by forces that remain submerged and which undermine the larger interests of the community. Ricoeur's sound compromise requires that the hermeneutic process involve an internal critique even as one is attemtping to understand and communicate the understanding.

Of course, one should not presume that Professor Mohanty has not himself considered these objections, as will be evident to the reader from the pages to follow. Doubtless, though, the essays treating of these and related issues in this volume are likely to excite, perhaps even incite, a number of Indian philosophers to make their own considered responses, and there has been no dearth of rethinking in the area. How else would the distinctive character of Indian philosophy being quested for be clarified and articulated? (See, for instance, the felicitation volume for Professor Mohanty, edited by Daya Krishna, ICPR, Delhi, 1990). Mohanty has throughout taken a keen interest in this development and his own frequent responses have helped to advance this rather neglected yet important position to emerge from within Indian philosophy. We are here, of course, alluding to the philosophical virtues of inspiration, dialogue, *vādavivāda*, of lending an empathic ear and giving of oneself in time and inner reflective space, enough to humble and propel one's confidence into further or deeper thinking. And all this without the slightest trace of egoistic reclamation or the desire to appropriate as one's own what thought itself does not reveal. For philosophy to grow it has to involve more than simply an acceptance or rejection of a position, a theory, a claim or whatever. It needs critical and

at the same time creative reflection in the spirit of dispassion such that an advance is made over the theory or concept (or condition) one feels dissatisfied with. It also needs a perspective that draws on diversities from within its own history—and a sensitivity to the possible cultural roots even of the most abstract philosophical concept or theory—and on alternatives, even if imagined ones, developed in other traditions of thought. What it does not need is the unmitigated faith that the tradition of philosophy within which this or that concept or issue is being contemplated necessarily holds the key to its fullest and furthest development; still less, does it need the naive belief that there is, for whatever historical reason, only one tradition or kind of philosophizing which holds the key to complete self-fulfillment (conceptual or otherwise, or in its transcendence, or via public solidarity, and so on). In regard to such openness, as in other regards, Professor Mohanty has proved again his ability to bring new and fresh light in the contemporary pursuit of philosophy in India as elsewhere.

But there is more to be said about the specific contributions of Professor Mohanty, which space here does not permit for a longer discussion; besides, the evidence is to be had in the essays that follow, and indeed elsewhere in the steady stream of papers and books which Professor Mohanty seems to be capable of surprising the philosophical community with. On his understanding of the role of reason in Indian thought, one is best referred to his book on this subject matter (*Reason and Tradition in Indian Thought*, Oxford, in press). One is left to wonder what further surprises Professor Mohanty has in store for us as his tireless pen moves thoughtfully and meticulously over the yellow pad, late into the night and in the early hours of the morning, wherever he finds himself to be—at the corner family table, in airport lounges, or in the bustling suburbs of Calcutta.

Structure of the volume

The diverse nature of the essays collected in this volume reflect both the internal diversity within the Indian philosophical tradition and the range of issues Professor Mohanty has concerned himself with over a period spanning some four decades and across three continents. One will find that the large number of essays make

profuse references to comparable treatment of the problem or issue discussed in Western thinking as well. A few essays are exclusively devoted to the larger, *meta*-, inquiry of whether Indian philosophy and modes of Western thinking, notably phenomenology and rationality, can be said to intersect in any fundamentally significant ways: the question of their identity, difference, or an alternate relation, is rigorously pursued.

It may be noted that Professor Mohanty's writing on this particular problematic (not a problem as such of philosophy but certainly a problem for contemporary philosophers who are that bit sensitive to the relativity of cultures and their distinctive intellectual developments), dates back to 1953 when the author presented a paper on 'Phenomenology in Indian Philosophy' to the XIII International Congress of Philosophy, held in Brussels. This study itself had started with an earlier paper on 'Husserl's Phenomenology and Indian Idealism', (*Philosophical Quarterly*, India, XXIV/3, 1951.) A spate of essays endeavouring to confront and interact Indian philosophy variously with phenomenology and existentialism, and generally Western philosophy, followed. These confrontations are brought to life in terms of specific problems of mutual concern and interest, such as the nature of the subject and person, theories of knowledge (under the Indian rubric of *pramāṇa*), the role of intention, intuition, interpretation, doubt, and a special case of perception. A separate section brings together some of the essays in this area of concern. These broadly encompass concerns with epistemology, but not exclusively so. This section more or less brings together essays on metaphysics and ways of dealing with metaphysical problems, which inevitably involves one in reflecting on the nature of intuition, consciousness, the self, language, tradition, religious phenomena, and related matters.

The reader is asked to bear with the broad subject-wise arrangement of these essays, for, written as they have been between 1953 and 1990, they cannot be expected to yield a neat and systematic book of thoughts. Chronological ordering would not have been of much help for some of the essays were written for one purpose while others with some other purpose in mind; not all were published either, or not published until much later. The collection is characteristic of a philosopher who begins not with an already-defined program but who seeks to define his philosophical responses to

problems and issues as he meets and confronts them in his long journey. He might retrospectively have thought to arrange the areas of concern and his reflections on these in a somewhat different order, which one does when one begins a new chapter in a new book; but this reversal is hardly possible with inscriptions that have already occurred, for they are now part of history (maybe of tradition) and are no longer the decorum of the author as such. Hence we have exercized some liberty in determining the sections and their respective contents. Even then there is trepidation, for one might selectively read essays in a section which appear to deal with a particular issue or concern, while ignoring essays in the other sections which could well be dealing with the same issue in relation to other issues or from another, perhaps less, perhaps more, sophisticated perspective. After trying out a number of different possible strategies, it was decided to divide the essays into three broad sections, beginning with essays dealing with key problems in Metaphysics, Epistemology and Language under Part I. In Part II are gathered essays which canvass issues with greater anthropological and social/ethical bearing, for which the author had turned to the thoughts of Sri Aurobindo, Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, Rabindranath Tagore, and other such luminaries of the Indian freedom and reform struggle. These essays were written rather early, and they make efforts towards understanding the phenomenon of religion as well, as is apparent in the essay on Raja Rammohan Roy. Part III brings together essays which in more general ways discuss the relation between Western philosophy and phenomenology and Indian philosophy. These essays have a particular orientation which a comparative philosopher may not find too appealing, because they do not dwell on isolated problems or concepts but rather take 'overview' sweeps, retrospective glances and critical stances between and across the traditions of philosophy. However, this is not to say that the essays do not emerge from the generalities to more specific issues, for such discussions would not be possible without reference to concrete examples and analysis (even deconstituting or 'deconstruction') of the specific notions from the perspective of another system of thought, and vice versa (e.g. the idea of self, or the presuppositions of modernity from the perspective of a pre-modern tradition and the 'post-modern' condition.)

Finally, it needs to be emphasized that the essays collected herein

are by no means intended to be representative of Professor Mohanty's continuing writings on Indian philosophy, just when he finds himself drawn once again to the roots of the philosophical and spiritual tradition to which he was born and had his early nurturing in. A number of essays that appeared in publications concurrently with some of the essays in this volume have been incorporated or expanded into chapters in separate book-length treatment of the problems and concerns on which the author had continued to contemplate, with what attention he could afford.

Nonetheless, the present collection of essays (some of which would have otherwise remained within dusty covers in inaccessible places) should suffice to mirror a lasting and significant contribution Professor Mohanty, now in his early sixties, has made to Indian philosophy, and in some ways chartered its further horizons in the contemporary intellectual *lebenswelt* as it strides closer to the twenty-first century.

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Author's Prologue

The idea of putting these essays together was originally broached by Shri Santosh Mukherjee of Oxford University Press, New Delhi. With a great deal of hesitation, I agreed. Purushottama Bilimoria of Deakin University, Australia, agreed to shoulder the burden of collecting and preparing them for publication. But for these two, these essays would have remained dispersed in the journals and the collections where they initially appeared.

For me, as the author, these essays chart, amongst them, a sort of intellectual autobiography. The earliest of them, 'Phenomenology in Indian Philosophy' was written during first year of graduate school at Göttingen and was presented at the International Philosophy Congress in Brussells in 1953. The latest of these essays, 'Are Indian and Western Philosophies radically different?' was read at Haverford College in 1990 and again, in a revised draft, at the annual meeting of the Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy in Melbourne, in September of 1990.

'Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy' is a theme on which I have tried my hand (and thoughts) several times, leaving behind a trail of dissatisfaction for myself. But it, with some variations, is a theme I was almost destined to think on. Nearly twenty years later, I wrote another essay comparing Phenomenology and Existentialism with Indian Philosophy. Another sixteen years afterwards, a third attempt was meant for the *British Journal of Phenomenology* for its issue remembering Husserl's passing away fifty years after the event. In a slightly revised draft, this essay was read at the conference on that general theme held in New Delhi in 1988. These essays will show the extreme caution with which I have applied myself to the general task of Comparative Philosophy. Tagging

theories on one side to theories on the other has seemed to me to be a neat project, but unsatisfying precisely because of its neatness. After the facile clichés with which a whole generation of comparativists got down to their work are set aside, as they must be, the task, I thought, is to detect differences at a deeper conceptual and methodological level—before commonalities are set in the proper perspective. Some of the essays in this volume do precisely that. But the talk of difference must be placed within a horizon of commonality, if we have to avoid the sort of relativism which is the rage of today. The essay 'Are Indian and Western Philosophies radically different?' addresses that theme: how to avoid relativism with regard to philosophy. Does the very sense of 'philosophy' vary from one tradition to another?

Returning to India in 1954 after a doctorate from Göttingen, I called on Vinoba Bhave as he was entering Orissa, my home state, in the course of his *padayātrā*. I had heard a great deal about his sharp intellect and Sanskrit scholarship and was excited about his land-gift movement. As I walked with him for over a year, he taught some of us accompanying him some of the shorter Upaniṣads. I was struck by the fact that he did not look upon himself as one who was undertaking to bring about an agrarian revolution in the country. He rather looked upon himself as belonging to the tradition of India's innumerable saints and *sant*s who walked across the country on foot teaching the people in matters spiritual. Vinoba was teaching the need for 'updating' the traditional theme of 'self-knowledge' to meet the needs of modern science and technology. What attracted me, of all things, was that here was an intellectual, trained in the rigor of Sanskrit scholarship, out there in the villages talking highly philosophical matters—not superficial politics—to the common folk in their own language. This experience touched a deeply sensitive chord in my already Gandhian sensibility. I was comforted that the basic Gandhian ideas were not after all as archaic as they appeared to be.

I came to Calcutta as an undergraduate student in the year 1945. At the college, and amongst fellow students, two issues were of central concern. At a more metaphysical level, I was profoundly worried about the validity of Śaṁkara's *māyāvāda*. Sri Aurobindo seemed to be a more promising option. At a more mundane level, the concern was Gandhi vs. Marx. My first philosophy teacher

Nalini Kanta Brahman impressed upon me the logical elegance of the structure of Śaṁkara's system, but Sri Aurobindo's multi-dimensional thinking continued to attract me. Later on, I had the opportunity of studying some of Advaita Vedānta's key texts (*Bhāmati* and *Vivaraṇa*) under the great Pundit Mm. Yogendranāth Tarkavedāntatirtha. I was impressed by the beauty of the thought, its neat elegance, its simplicity. But that precisely is what also left me dissatisfied. The other issue was easier to settle: living under the shadow of Gandhi, seeing him at the prayer meetings at the Sodepur Ashram of the late Satish Dasgupta, reading about the great spiritual heights he attained during his lonely journey through Noakhali, it was much easier for me to decide in his favor. Marxian thinking again impressed me by its logical structure, but Gandhi was experientially more attractive, he did not commit himself to a rigid system. I was refusing to let my thought be imprisoned by a neat logical system. Both Śaṁkara and Marx I admired, but they were too systematic for my taste. One reason why Vinoba Bhave impressed me was his openness to ideas beyond Gandhi; he was a Gandhian if there was any, but he was receptive to Aurobindo, modern science and modern technology. The Gandhian ideas were not, so it seemed, any longer quaint; they appeared to have the strength to cope with modern times. A Gandhian need not be an antiquarian.

It was before leaving for Göttingen that another major influence on my thinking came about: from the library of the late Rash Behari Das I picked up a copy of Boyce Gibson's translation of Husserl's *Ideas*. The book captivated me, the idea of a descriptive philosophy was attractive (I could imagine, how much the young scholars who assembled around Husserl in Göttingen could have been under the spell of that program), there was some remote resonance of Vedāntic ideas which sounded a familiar chord (if only Vedānta could be freed from its elegant system and made more experiential and descriptive). In Göttingen, I did not learn much about Husserl, I devoted more time to learning mathematics (under Deuring and Siegel) and Vedic philology (under Waldschmidt). But a large part of my life has been under Husserl's influence. The essays in this volume do not bear much explicit evidence of that. The earlier essays in this volume were written at the time I was beginning my work on phenomenology. They show what I was trying to come to terms with: trained in

European intellectuality, I was eager, on the one hand, to pick up Navya-Nyāya at the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, but at the same time trying to respond to India's cultural mileau of the immediate post-independence years: to Gandhi, Vinoba and Aurobindo.

After having travelled far and wide, in the world of philosophy, after a lifetime of research in phenomenology and relating it to modern analytic philosophy, it is a cleansing experience, elevating emotionally and challenging intellectually, to return to one's roots, where all that began. As one advances in age, that return is almost a spiritual need. As the first part of my two-part work on Indian thought awaits publication, these essays have a peculiar relevance for me, and hopefully, for philosophers, in India and in the west, who have taken interest in my ideas. It is for my readers to judge if my understanding of Indian thought is authentic and also if my understanding of western phenomenology has not been subtly influenced by my continuing concern with Indian philosophy. Explicit comparison I have generally shied away from. But as work in the two different fields progressed, I could sense a coming together, not a forced comparison.

The beauty of Indian *thought* is that here the academic and the non-academic mingle together, yet without sacrificing the rigor of thinking. Even when the too often used clichés about Indian philosophy are exposed and set aside, there still remains a peculiar aesthetic *perfume* about Indian thought which is exhilarating. If in these essays I have sometimes played the role of a severe critic, that is only in relation to some interpretors who, to my mind, have not recognized the austere intellectuality of the Indian tradition, who have softened its hard-headedness, and downplayed its critical spirit. After all that is said and done, we have, in that tradition, a moving spirit which, once you open yourself to it, sweeps you away and overwhelms you. I have taken my occasional and not infrequent dip in that stream, only to escape its clutches to be able to be both inside and outside it. The same is true of my relation to the transcendental-philosophical tradition from Kant through Husserl. Where do I stand, then, at what place, from where I could be an outsider for both—and also an insider? A close friend remarked, possibly there are two Mohantys; another added, the two are non-different. To aim at thinking from within two traditions is possible, although it has been a deeply disturbing experience. That this is possible, refutes

the now all too common relativisms, and establishes *for me* the unity of rational thinking, although that unity is not what one can begin with, but has to ceaselessly strive towards.

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PART I
Some Problems in Metaphysics, Epistemology and Language

1
Philosophy as Reflection on Experience

Philosophy, in my view, consists of reflection on man's experience in relation to himself, to others and to the world. However, as a philosopher I find myself in a curiously ambivalent position. Being steeped in history, my reflection presupposes and proceeds on the foundation of the sedimented thoughts of other philosophers who either have preceded me in time or, through my contemporaries, have been able to exercise some significant influence on me. As a consequence, one may either say that my access to my own experience is mediated by the history of thought or that my experience itself is constituted by that history. And this history is not just the one history of human thought, but—to use a metaphor—consists in a series of concentric circles such that the closer the circle is to the centre the greater is its relevance for me. Thus, the history and tradition of Indian thought dominate my experience in an especially pre-eminent sense, but the history of European thought is also closer to that centre than many other histories (e.g., African and Latin American). There does not seem to be, for me, any major philosophical problem which I could think through without reference to this historical tradition. The most relevant of those problems, again, are those which relate me specifically to the tradition of Indian philosophical thought. Thus, philosophical reflection is inevitably historical, partly because my experience itself is permeated by history. At the same time, if philosophical reflection were merely historical then it could not have survived the passage of time, except in the form of sedimented memories of cultural achievements, it would not have been amenable to supra-historical logical assessment, scientific-objective questioning, it could not lay claim to truth. In philosophy what matters most is not believing in a proposition, however historically relevant that proposition may be, but how

precisely that belief has been grounded and is validated. This grounding or validating has to be based on principles that are not historical. Thus in the texture of philosophy, as in the texture of all experience, the historical and the supra-historical are inextricably woven together.

'Experience', reflection on which constitutes philosophy, should be understood in the widest possible sense. There is a common practice amongst philosophers to commit themselves, without saying so, to their most important philosophical decisions right at the beginning: they do so when they begin by delimiting experience, in an arbitrary manner, to some preferred mode or to some preferred type. Thus, for example, a great many philosophers want to mean by 'experiencing' something like 'sensing' and understand by the latter something like 'receiving impressions or data through one or more of the sense-organs'. In further analysis, experience so understood is neatly divided into momentary bits of sensings (of sense data). What escapes such an understanding of experience—often shared in common by empiricists and rationalists alike—is a whole range of other modes: experience of relations, of things in their complex setting, of cultural and aesthetic objects as such, of other persons, of oneself and also moral and religious experience. In order to remedy such one-sidedness of philosophical commitments, it has always seemed useful to me that philosophers keep the following statement of Whitehead in mind:

> Nothing can be omitted, experience drunk and experience sober, experience sleeping and experience awake, experience drowsy and experience wide-awake, experience self-conscious and experience self-forgetful, experience intellectual and experience physical, experience religious and experience sceptical, experience anxious and experience care-free, experience anticipatory and experience retrospective, experience happy and experience grieving, experience dominated by emotions and experience under self-restraint, experience in the light and experience in the dark, experience normal and experience abnormal.[1]

What does 'reflection' on experience mean? Just as a narrow conception of experience arbitrarily restricts and distorts the data to be reflected upon so also a false conception of reflection misleads us as to what philosophy may have to do with these data. Many philosophers understand by 'reflection' an attempt to explain the

data of experience or to account for them. Sometimes one also means by 'reflecting on experience', nothing but 'seeking to interpret experience'. As would be obvious, neither explaining nor interpreting could, by themselves, fully characterize the nature and goal of philosophical reflection, for there are other kinds of thinking activity—the scientific for example—which also want to explain and interpret experience. One then has to seek for some distinctive feature of philosophical explanation and philosophical interpretation. To this the usual answer is: philosophical explanation and philosophical interpretation are from the most comprehensive point of view, while the scientific or religious explanations are from limited points of view. However, this is a highly unsatisfactory answer. The answer no doubt concedes that all explanations and interpretations are from some point of view or other. It also covertly recognizes that this choice of a point of view has something arbitrary about it, and confers a sort of subjectivity on the explanation or interpretation propounded. However, it entertains the hope, and gives us the assurance, that once the most comprehensive point of view is adopted somehow the alleged arbitrariness in the choice of a point of view and the consequent subjectivity would be overcome, and philosophical thinking would reach objective validity. Now this hope and this assurance are but illusory. Either the most comprehensive point of view is no point of view, but then it makes no sense to say that the philosopher seeks to explain the data of experience but from no point of view—for then he would not be explaining or interpreting, if these activities require, by their very nature, some point of view or other, some system, model or framework. Or, the most comprehensive point of view is a point of view, and then its claim to be the most comprehensive, in fact the very sense of its comprehensiveness, would be in question. Furthermore, what is the test of a point of view's being the most comprehensive one? It seems to me that the philosopher who wants to explain or account for the data of experience is covertly operating with the idea of scientific explanation but does not want to have his explanations suffer from the limitations which are methodologically necessary for scientific enquiry. This desire to have the cake and also eat it gives rise to a most embarrassing situation. What does, for example, 'explaining' mean in the philosophical context? In the context of scientific enquiry, a test of a good explanation is successful predic-

tion. Philosophical explanation does not lay claim to this. And yet the philosophers do operate with the 'covering law model' of explanation.

It seems to me, therefore, that the proper task of philosophy is misconstrued when it is formulated in terms of explaining the data of experience. It is already a philosophical problem of the highest importance to ascertain what precisely those data of experience are. In the case of the sciences, each science lays down—implicitly or explicitly—what criteria are to be satisfied by its data in order to be accepted as data. In other words, the sciences are only obliquely concerned with the data of experience. They no doubt arise out of the problems and demands implicit in experience, but by the very nature of their undertaking they remove themselves from lived experience—not merely at the level of theory-construction but even at the primary level of data collection, for what sorts of things are to count as data are already pre-legislated by the demands of the theory. Thus there are no theory-neutral unidealized data in the context of the scientific endeavour.

For the psychology of the behaviourist, for example, only those forms of human behaviour which are quantifiable, as drained of all intentional and valuational significance, constitute the data. At least to begin with, by the very nature of the programme, it does not know of what we may call, by contrast, lived behaviour as contrasted with observed behaviour. Now it is precisely one of the tasks of philosophy to aim at the discovery and description of the structure of experience itself. This, by itself, is so difficult and engrossing a task that after this is done the further task of accounting for that structure would either wait till this is relatively well in progress or would lose much of its supposed theoretical attraction.

To be sure, a description of the structure of experience is no easy task, and possibly the philosopher could only asymptotically aim at satisfactorily performing it. Once we set aside the sort of reflection involved in efforts to provide a philosophical explanation for the way things are supposed to be, the other sense of 'reflection' comes to the forefront. This consists in trying to take an unprejudiced look at experience, to 'steal a glance' at it without disturbing it, to be able to watch it arise on the basis of past sedimentations of meaning and wither away leaving behind its own conceptual sedimentations, without forcing one's own concepts on it. This is not wishing to

return to the childlike purity and innocence of a pre-conceptual immediate experience. That conception of experience as unstructured, non-conceptual immediate and pure—à la Bradley—is itself the result of a romantic desire for such, as much as the atomistic conception of experience as consisting in discrete bits of unrelated momentary sensations is the product of a large body of scientific theory. Experience, as we live through it, is not like any of these patterns. It is structured but not atomistic; it is lived, but not out and out sensationalistic; it is also conceptual but not idealized and exact. The concepts it lives behind and generates at the first instance are vague and fluid, inexact and lively. But again the experience to be reflected upon is not merely the pre-reflective, pre-judgmental encounter with the world of things and persons, natural and cultural objects, but also post-reflective, albeit predicative, judgments about whatever was so encountered. Furthermore, no reflection on experience is adequate unless it reflects on itself. Reflection is not radical unless it is aware of its own situation, its own movements and its own limitations and destiny. Such awareness is likely to limit the chances of an unbounded optimism (in the capabilities of reflection) and naive transcendentalism (which is unaware of its own situation in time and history).

One necessary pre-condition for philosophical reflection in this sense is the cultivation of a cautious watchfulness for the vitiating influence of unsuspected interpretations and prejudices. Various vitiating factors may be distinguished. There are, first, what may be called theoretical prejudices, deriving from either philosophical theories or scientific theories. There are practical prejudices deriving from one's valuational preferences and attitudes. There are also more deeply rooted interpretations which rest in the nature of the language one uses. It is in this last point, it seems to me, that the linguistic philosophers have made great contributions towards bringing to light persistent sources of misinterpretations of language. Linguistic analysis, both in this negative sense, and also in the positive sense of unravelling the multifarious ways in which words are used, is thus an indispensable aid to phenomenological description.

It seems to me that methodological monism, in philosophy, has to be rejected. At the most basic level, the philosopher's job consists in analysis (of concepts, meanings, uses of language) and description (of the essential structures of experience). We have now to see how,

after the preliminary surveying of the terrain is fairly advanced, the philosopher may legitimately go ahead with the help of other methods. There are two such methods, in the use of which one has to exercise the utmost caution. One is metaphysical construction, and the other is dialectics. To consider the second first: I am using 'dialectics' not in the Hegelain sense of a progressive unfolding of concepts through a systematic use of contradictions and resolution of such contradictions through syntheses, but in the sense of a continuing process of arguments and counter-arguments. Allegedly wrong theories or false philosophical propositions are to be discarded either by demonstrating that they are untrue to facts, i.e., to some undeniable testimony of experience, or by bringing out some logical inconsistency in the theory or proposition concerned, or by both procedures. It is the second method of discarding a philosophical contention that requires dialectics. I should add that dialectics can at most prove a proposition to be false, but it cannot positively establish the truth of one. Positively establishing the truth of one would need either adequate phenomenological evidence or a sort of transcendental argument which appeals to the 'conditions of the possibility of experience being what it is'.

Philosophical thinking, it would seem, cannot avoid some kind of metaphysical construction or other. But one should be able to distinguish between metaphysical constructions that are speculative, in which thought is aided by flights of imagination, and metaphysical thinking that is solidly rooted in the descriptive soil. Nicolai Hartmann's dictum 'Minimum of Metaphysics' and Strawson's conception of a descriptive metaphysics appeal to me. If by 'metaphysics' be meant enquiry into the most general structures of experience, such enquiry—quite independent of the issues of realism and idealism—would require a minimum of transcendence of the attitude of description. It would be a metaphysics of experience in the true sense—neutral as between realism and transcendental idealism. Similarly, a metaphysics of subjectivity is a legitimate field of enquiry which would require a methodological suspension or *epoché* of the belief in, but not a denial of, the reality of a world transcending the life of consciousness. In the carrying out of these metaphysical programmes what the philosopher needs most is: a profound sensitivity for phenomena precisely as they present themselves, a refusal to deny phenomena to satisfy theory, a desire to search for

simplicity combined with a willingness to distrust it, readiness to recognize diversities and 'gaps' as much as affinities and continuities according to how they show themselves, and an unwillingness to generalize, without caution, over the universal domain what has phenomenological 'backing' only within a restricted sub-domain.

These methodological principles may well be illustrated with the help of an example: the concept of intentionality. The descriptive metaphysician, once he recognizes intentionality as an essential structure of conscious life, would refuse to deny it on *a priori* theoretical grounds (e.g., on the ground that consciousness, being self-revealing, cannot be, in reality, of an object), would recognize all the various modes of intentionality (bodily, mental; cognitive, affective, volitional; unconscious) without wanting to reduce them into any one, and would refuse to generalize the property of intentionality over the universal domain, i.e., to hold that all objects whatsoever are intentional (e.g., 'every actual entity prehends every other').

It is at this point that I should insist on the need for rejecting a conception of philosophy that has considerable influence on the Indian mind. Philosophy, I submit, is not a rational defence or clarification of the words of the scriptures. Interpretation, semantic or syntactical, of the scriptures is a different venture, and would constitute a part of the theology of the religion whose scriptures are under consideration. The belief, widely shared by classical Indian philosophers, that philosophy should accept the authority of the scriptures and rationally defend them is both supported by, and itself supports, the epistemological thesis that *śabda*, by itself, is a way, *sui generis*, of acquiring valid knowledge, a *pramāṇa*. I do not think this latter thesis is acceptable. On hearing a sentence being uttered by another person, one understands—if one 'knows' the language—its meaning, and in case one already trusts the reliability of the speaker one comes to believe in what he says. But neither the understanding of the meaning of a sentence nor the belief in its truth amounts to knowing that the facts are as stated. Knowing requires that mere understanding be supplemented by verificatory evidence, the grasping of the meaning-intention be fulfilled, the belief be supported by adequate evidence. Failure to distinguish between 'understanding', 'believing' and 'knowing' is at the root of the epistemological status accorded to *śabda*.

The only strong point in that thesis concerns the unique status

of scriptural words with regard to giving us knowledge of wh ought to be or ought not to be done. Other means of knowing- perception and inference being the most important of them—yiel knowledge of what is the case. What ought or ought not to b done cannot be ascertained either by perception or by inferenc Therefore, the argument runs, the unique, irreplaceable means c knowing about these matters are the words of the scriptures. No there is no doubt an important element of truth in this argumen and it is this. In the case of an indicative sentence putatively statin a fact there is a distinction, as just pointed out, between understand ing the meaning of the sentence and knowing that the fact is a stated. The latter requires some sort of verification. In the case c an imperative sentence, on the contrary, like 'One ought not t harm any living being', the question of verification, of ascertainin if one really ought not to harm any living being, is pointless, fo an imperative does not say what is the case but tells us what ough to be done. It would seem then to follow that hearing an imperativ being uttered and understanding its meaning would suffice fo knowing that such and such action ought to be done—provide we have faith in the trustworthiness of the utterer. The argumen however, is faulty. One has to face the following alternative accepting an imperative as valid, as binding on me, as saying wh really ought to be done may mean either choosing it and committin oneself to it on grounds other than theoretical (e.g., because it emotionally satisfying); or accepting it as theoretically most satisfy ing. In the former case, hearing an imperative being uttered an understanding its meaning may lead to its acceptance but suc acceptance would not amount to a knowledge that such actio ought to be done. If it be replied that in cases of moral choices th question of knowledge does not arise, then it should be point out if that be so the argument sketched above would not pro that scriptural utterances are means of knowing what ought to done, they may at best be means of persuading men to make mo decisions. If one chooses the second alternative, i.e., holds that moral injunction is accepted on theoretically satisfying ground then of course one should concede to the claim that one knows th such and such action ought to be done, but at the same time th original argument is defeated, for now something more than mere hearing and understanding is needed for knowing that such an

such action ought to be done, and this something more, even if it cannot be a verificatory experience, can be rational argumentation of some sort or other. The point then in brief is this: if one can be said to know that such and such action ought to be done, then mere understanding of the meanings of scriptural imperatives cannot yield such knowledge; if one cannot be said to know such matters, then also the scriptures are not the means of their knowledge. My purpose has been not to question the usefulness, and even the importance and dignity, of the scriptures in man's ethical and religious life. My purpose has been to argue that they are not a unique source of knowledge, a *pramāṇa*.

It is also often held that supernormal experiences, not enjoyed by ordinary men, are embodied in the words of the scriptures, and if philosophy is to be reflection on experience then it cannot afford to close its eyes to the rarest, and yet the most valuable, of human experiences—e.g., the experiences of the mystics. There is a serious difficulty in accepting this contention. For although in principle a philosopher should not, as emphasized earlier, arbitrarily delimit the domain of experience or seek to level it down (or up) to one type, yet I cannot honestly make certain kinds of statements, or even investigations, about experiences I never have had. I can of course make hypothetical statements of the form 'If there were experiences of the said kind, then...'. I can certainly make internal statements ('internal' in Carnap's sense) which purport to characterize mystic experience as mystics would say they had. But I cannot make external statements ('external' also in Carnap's sense) categorically incorporating statements describing the structure of alleged supernormal experiences into my total philosophy of experience. For I do not know what it is to have those experiences. There are nevertheless several ways in which consideration of mystic experiences may be of relevance even to a philosophy of the sort I am here advocating. The logical possibility of such supernormal experiences would give me a sense of what is logically contingent, what is logically necessary and what is syntactically necessary in the structure of our normal modes of experience. Secondly, if the thought of such supernormal experiences be regarded as a demand to the actual structure of our experience, without losing sight of the distinction between what is known to be the case and what is felt and appreciated as a demand.

No less misleading than the ones already discussed is the contention that the method of philosophy should be not intellectual but intuitive. The philosopher surely is not called upon to exercise any special cognitive faculty—a cognitive faculty that is not at the disposal of others. Perhaps it is unfair to the intuitionists to say that they want the philosopher to develop such a special uncommon faculty, and it may be that what they say is that many other people who are not philosophers—e.g., poets and scientists—also make use of the non-intellectual alogical cognitive faculty known as 'intuition'. But this would make the entire concept of intuition too vague to be of much use. This is not the place to go into the many different, often mutually incompatible, senses in which the word 'intuition' is used in philosophy. The one sense, if there is any such, that might be relevant in ascertaining the method of philosophy is that which, while retaining the core meaning of 'seeing', yet does not cut it asunder from that sustained, laborious intellectual effort which is involved in philosophical reflection. It is true that while many philosophers have constructed systems and theories, all philosophical reflection does not consist of such constructions. To say that philosophical activity is essentially intellectual is not to assert that it consists in constructing systems and theories; it is not also to deny that the great philosopher is one who acquires, validates and communicates genuine insights into the structure of experience. There is an important sense in which an essential structure has to be intuited or 'seen', but such intuiting is closer to what has been called Gestalt perception, and even to rational abstraction, than to the intuitions of the poet or the mystic.

It is of the utmost importance to note that having or living through an experience of whatever sort is not, by itself, to know. Philosophical activity itself is not to be a surrogate for any kind of pre-philosophical experience. Just as the philosopher's task is to reflect on experience and not to reproduce it, so also any one who lives through an experience unreflectively does not really know what it all is about. Knowledge, ordinary or philosophical, surely requires intuitive experience (direct sense-perception or any sort of appropriate verificatory experience), but such intuitive experience to count as knowledge should be playing the role of 'fulfilling' a prior meaning intention (e.g., verifying a hypothesis).

If philosophy is not a rational defence of religious faith or articulation

of one's personal intuitions, it is also not a systematization of scientific knowledge or a defence of scientific faith. One of the ideals of philosophical thinking is to be free from presuppositions by making every implicit presupposition explicit and subjecting it to critical examination. If this be so, neither religious nor scientific faith could provide it with that which is to be accepted in advance and subsequently defended. Certainly, it is one of the foremost tasks of modern philosophy to understand the structure of scientific thinking and its application, through technology, for both science and technology have added a new dimension to human experience. However, both science and technology presuppose pre-scientific experience, they arise out of it, they idealize the vague typicalities that characterize pre-scientific experience and transform them into exact concepts, they drain man's lived experience of its qualitative and valuational content and quantify whatever is left of it, they construct theories and theoretical models whose cognitive value is assessed by success in prediction, and then technology seeks to re-establish that contact with the lived world which had been lost through theorizing. Saying all this is not meant to accuse the sciences of any moral or intellectual misdemeanour; it is not to say, e.g., that the sciences ought to have taken care of the concrete richness of lived experience. It is only to draw attention to the nature of scientific idealization and to its genesis out of pre-scientific lived experience. The philosopher's prime concern is not with the sciences as such, but with the pre-scientific experience out of which the sciences arise and by which they continue to be supported. It is no wonder that 'perception' continues to be a primary problem for philosophy. All thought aims at it and is sustained by it.

Experience is not a merely immanent flow of subjective states but, being incurably characterized by intentionality, is always of something. Furthermore, just as bits of experience are not self-contained atoms but are related to each other through primary retention and secondary memory, primary protention and secondary expectation, and the ubiquitous forms of associative synthesis, thereby constituting one inner time-consciousness, so also their intentional correlates, the objects of experience, are given not as self-contained unities but always within a field or horizon which again points beyond itself

to larger and larger horizons. The most comprehensive horizon within which any object of experience whatsoever is experienced, is the world. In this sense, any experience is experience of the world, but in this sense alone. In other words, the world is not an object of experience but the horizon within which any object whatsoever is experienced.

The world, in this sense, is not the same as the physical world or the world of physics. It is rather that of which the scientific world is an idealization. The pre-scientific perceived world is one in which the natural and the human are blended together, in which things have not only natural but also valuational qualities, and in which persons are the centres of their worlds. The objectifying theoretical interest has not yet come into play. Within this large horizon of the lived and perceived world, the scientific achievements of the man take their place both as cultural achievements and as objectifying large segments of that world.

This is particularly clear in the case of one's own body, space and time. The conception of my body, even of the other's body, as a material object, subject to the laws of physics, chemistry and molecular biology, is a later idealized construction. My body is primarily, pre-theoretically, perceived by me as a set of motor and cognitive abilities by which I, in a manner which is specifically mine, explore the world in which I find myself. I do not locate it in space as I locate other material objects, for all location in space that I perform is with reference to my body as a 'zero' point. Even when I perceive the other's body as a body, I ascribe to it thoughts and feelings as I would do to myself, so that the other's body is not given to me as a material object. Similarly, the originally perceived space is not the uniform mathematical space, it is rather qualitatively diversified with such distinctions as 'familiar' and 'strange', 'assuring' and 'threatening', 'profane' and 'sacred'. The time that is so perceived is not the uniform, measurable, therefore quantitative and one-dimensional series, but again is qualitatively diversified: diversified in respect of its 'flow' (compare 'an hour' spent in anxiety with 'an hour' spent in rapturous enjoyment) and in respect of direction (compare the linear time of profane existence with the 'cyclic' time of the experience of the sacred for which unique events like the birth of a god recur, to be celebrated and relived). To explain these diversities in experience of body, space and time as

subjective—emotional, associative—interpretations of the objective body, mathematical space and mathematical time is to introduce a Cartesian distinction that is posterior to originary experience and an achievement of reflective thinking.

The theory of perception, as Merleau-Ponty has very ably shown, has suffered under the assumption that if the world is as physics supposes it to be, and if the human body is what physiology shows it to be, then our perception of the world must be the end-state of a long chain of physico-physiological processes and there must be a one-to-one correspondence between the elements (properties) of the object out there and the components of the perceptual experience itself. The latter then is decomposed into little bits of sensations (some of which we may not notice at all), each one of which corresponds to some property, aspect or component of the object that is being perceived. Onto this psychological atomism is then grafted a doctrine of 'construction', either in the form of associative synthesis or in the form of synthesis by the Kantian a priori categories. To perceive becomes to construct, perception being an intellectual process. Perception of the other person becomes an analogical inference, perception of aesthetic and cultural objects a subjective, or rather emotive, superimposition. As against this, two points need to be made: perception of material objects need not serve as the paradigmatic example in the light of which other cognitive claims (like those with regard to other minds and values) have to be assessed and, in the second place, perception of material objects itself need not be understood in terms of 'sensations' (and 'sense data') and 'construction'. The notion of 'sensation', far from being a descriptive concept, is rather the product of the scientific theories of classical, physiological psychology. We do not have discrete bits of sensations—some of which we notice, others not. We perceive a meaningful complex structure within a field or setting—with its own 'inner' and 'outer' horizons, with intentional references to further possibilities of inner and outer explorations, to the 'other side' and to what is beyond, and so on. The material object is also perceived as that which others are able to perceive, which often has common intersubjective significance, which others can manipulate or explore along with, and may be in opposition to, me. And my perception of the other minds is a genuine perception *sui generis*, it is not an analogical inference from the perception of the others' physical behaviour.

The other's behaviour that I perceive is not a series of physical movements but has, right from the beginning, the significance of being 'pain', a 'smile', a 'warning', 'anger', a 'satisfaction' so that we need not analogically infer the presence of mental states behind and beyond them but, as it were, see the appropriate mental states through them as one sees colours through a transparent glass.

With this broadened conception of perception, a large part of my experienced, perceived world is the cultural world in which past history has been sedimented. No description of the structure of experience, then, can be complete without reference to the way cultural sedimentations constitute my world, or any world whatsoever. It is from this primitive point of view that, I suppose, philosophy of art or of aesthetic experience should begin. Otherwise, there is the risk of isolating aesthetic experience as an experience totally disconnected from ordinary perceptual experience, an experience which some people sometimes have in the presence of art objects while visiting museums or galleries. It would seem, however, that our ordinary perceptual experience has an aesthetic tinge; we perceive not mere men and women but beautiful and attractive faces, we perceive not mere patches of colour but colours that either attract or repel, not mere landscapes but ones which are perceived to be beautiful.

One could say the same of moral experience and also of logical thinking. The exclusive emphasis on the normative aspects of moral concepts, and on the notion of 'ought', has made moral philosophers blind to the fact that moral values are recognized as qualities of actual persons and their acts. Moral experience is not merely unconditional obedience to an imperative, an 'ought', but also perception of goodness, nobility, innocence, courage and other virtues in the lives and actions and persons of men and women around us. Systematic formalization of logic certainly creates the impression that the logical is the product of a higher order abstract thinking, but it is at the same time also forgotten that there is a kind of 'proto-logic' imbedded in our experience of the world where we have the analogues and 'origins' of most of our higher order, defined, logical concepts like 'negation', 'disjunction', and 'class'. The upshot of all this is not to 'reduce' the autonomy and distinctive traits of our higher aesthetic moral and logical pursuits to lower level empirical terms—which is what empiricism is found guilty of—but to realize that our origina-

tive experience of the world is not as impoverished as empiricism, under the influence of scientific and epistemological prejudices, makes it out to be, but is rich and variegated enough to contain the 'origin' of all higher order development out of it. This idea of 'origin' shall be so understood that it is compatible with a certain 'discontinuity' between the lived experience and the higher order concepts and significations that originate out of it.

I experience not only the world but also myself. My experience of myself is not a static, unidimensional phenomenon. In fact, however, I am aware of myself in many different dimensions: first, as a way of concretely existing as lived body, oriented towards the world and the others; then as a person who has a body, and finally as a subject who is objectively conscious of his body as also of the world and the others.

In the pre-reflective perception of, encounter with, wonder at and manipulation of the world, I am not conscious of myself as an 'I'. Here I concede to Sartre the truth that pre-reflective consciousness is non-egological. Our perceptions take the form 'Here comes the streetcar', our affections take the form 'This is lovable' and our volitions take the form 'This is to be done'. The distinctions between body and mind, outer and inner, are not there. I exist as one undivided being intentionally directed towards the world, aware of my existence but not of *me* as existing. I do not posit myself as a being over and above the world and others. My self-awareness of the world is positing and thetic. I *am* my felt body.

How and why, i.e., on what sorts of occasions, this primary pre-reflective experience gives way to the reflective judgement 'I perceive the streetcar coming', 'I love her' and 'I ought to do this' need not concern us here. For our present purpose what is important is that reflection introduces the 'I' into my consciousness. As one who is still involved in the world and with others, who acts and manipulates, knows, loves and hates, I now experience myself as a person. The 'I' is now detached from my felt body, not however as a transcendental subject but as one who owns, wills and moves it. The body is still not one thing amongst others, but *mine* in a pre-eminent sense. But I am not my body. I have a body, and am aware of intentions which I carry out but which I may not be able

to actualize. My intending is not as such executing a bodily movement: hence the distinction, within my total person, between what is inner and what is outer.

It requires, however, a philosophical reflection of a special sort, or possibly a spiritual, voluntarily cultivated stance, to be aware of oneself as a subject of one's mental states as well as of one's own body, before whose gaze everything other than itself is crystallized into an object. From this point of view, the word 'I' designates me as a person, but symbolically refers to, but does not directly designate, the subject, the transcendental ego which surely is not corporeal, which literally does not possess the body, but which contemplates the body as an object amongst other objects. The Indian philosophical and spiritual tradition has concentrated on this form of self-consciousness and has built up systems of philosophy based on this stance. The Western tradition approaches it in its concept of transcendental ego, but at the same time ascribes to the transcendental ego the active function of constituting, through its synthetic functions, the world: and, in doing so, the Western tradition analogically ascribes to the transcendental ego functions that, more literally speaking, belong not to the subject but to the person.

The lived body then is not distinguished from me, nor is it explicitly affirmed as 'I'. I am both a person and a transcendental ego. This 'both...and' is not a conjunction, but an alternation which also contains an essential possibility. As a person, I am in the world involved in time and history. As a transcendental ego, I am supramundane, reflecting on the world, time and history. I, as philosopher, happen to be both. My philosophical activity moves alternatively, on both levels. Hence the apparently paradoxical nature and also the pathos of responsible and honest philosophizing.

NOTES

1. *Adventures of Ideas*, New York, Macmillan, 1933, pp. 290–1.

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The Concept of Metaphysics

In this essay, I do not propose to try to formulate my own idea of what metaphysics *ought* to be like. Even if I had any such idea, that would be an idea of metaphysics, and not of something else, only in so far as there *is* a historically inherited concept of metaphysics to which my idea did in some respects conform. Thus in formulating my own concept of metaphysics I would be both bound and free: bound in so far as I would be trying to re-think the nature of a discipline that has historically developed, and free in so far as my thinking would contribute to that historical development and would reformulate the concept which I have taken over from history. Strawson has recognized[1], after distinguishing between descriptive and revisionary kinds of metaphysics, that most metaphysical systems are both: i.e. partly descriptive and partly revisionary. One could say that the same holds good of most concepts of metaphysics; they are also partly descriptive and partly revisionary. Here my attempt at formulating a notion of metaphysics shall be, in its explicit orientation, descriptive, though it may, by the inevitable logic of such kinds of thinking, in the end turn out to be in part revisionary.

Metaphysics can*not* be defined as the science of the supersensible. Kant no doubt was greatly under the spell of such a conception of metaphysics. Thus in his prize-winning essay '*Ueber die Fortschritte der Metaphysik seit Leibnitz und Wolff*' (1791)[2], Kant suggests the following definition of metaphysics: 'Sie ist die Wissenschaft, von der Erkenntnis des Sinnlichen zu der des Uebersinnlichen durch die Vernunft fortzuschreiten'. It was metaphysics as thus conceived which Kant critically examined in the Transcendental Dialectic of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, and which the logical positivists declared as consisting in sentences devoid of cognitive significance. However, this misunderstanding as to the precise nature and task of

metaphysics may be traced back to a historical misunderstanding of the Aristotelian term. If 'physics' means the science of the sensible nature, 'metaphysics' would mean the science of what is beyond the sensible, and so a science of the supersensible. That this is based upon a misunderstanding has been well argued by Martin Heidegger. The Greek *physis*, as Heidegger shows, does not mean the physical as contrasted with the psychical, it rather means, etymologically, what is born, 'das von sich aus Aufgehende'[3]. The word thus means *beings* or things or entities. Metaphysics, then,—in conformity with Aristotle's celebrated definition[4]—would mean the science of beings *qua* beings. It enquires into what constitutes the being-hood of beings. In this essay, we shall take this definition of metaphysics as our starting point, as what we have called the historically inherited notion. We shall try to re-think it over again.

Kant's conception of metaphysics as an enquiry into the supersensible is as little acceptable as the well-known division of metaphysics—which also he took over from his contemporaries—into rational psychology, rational cosmology and rational theology. This threefold division derives not from the conception of metaphysics as such, but from the Christian world view which divides all beings into three great regions: man, nature and God. While this may well be *a* metaphysical system, it cannot be taken as *the* classification of metaphysics as such, for it is quite conceivable and also defensible on good grounds, that this threefold division of beings does not hold good.

Let us then go back to Aristotle's definition of metaphysics as the science of being *qua* being. This definition however may be understood in various ways, depending on how we understand the notion of 'being *qua* being'. Let us use the word 'Being' (with a capital 'B') as an abbreviation for the expression 'being *qua* being', and contrast it with 'being' (with a lower case 'b'). Metaphysics may then be said to be the science of Being. But what does 'Being' mean? Further, what *sort of* concept is the concept of 'Being'? Our conception of the task and nature of metaphysics would depend upon how we answer these two questions.

Aristotle recognized that 'Being' has a variety of meanings, but also that it does, at the same time, refer to an identical concept.[5] These different meanings, he says, 'are all related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and have not merely the epithet

"being" in common.'[6] Aristotle's remarks in these and other passages leave room for different interpretations, and correspondingly for different answers to our second question stated above. The concept of Being may be regarded either as a *generic* concept, or as an *analogical* concept.

If 'C' is a generic concept, and m, n, o, p are its instances, then: (i) C is definable in terms of a common property abstracted from the particular instances; and (ii) it holds good of each of m, n, o, p that it is a C precisely *in the same sense.* To elucidate (ii), though m, n, o, p are different Cs, they are Cs precisely in the same sense: they are different instances of the same generic concept C, but they are *not as Cs* different. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle are instances of the concept 'man': they are different men. But of them it cannot be said that they are as men different, for the concept of man is a generic concept. It is quite different in the case of analogical concepts. An analogical concept is not definable in terms of a common property abstracted from its particular instances, and its instances are not cases of it precisely in the same. If P be an analogical concept, and p, q, r some of its instances, each of p, q, r of course is a P, but of some of them at least it holds good that they are not only different Ps, but *as Ps* different. Thus sensible particulars, subsistent essences, self-conscious persons are all beings no doubt, but they are not beings precisely in the same sense. They are not only different beings, but as beings different. Let us call such difference 'radical difference'. While my pen and my table are merely different beings, they are not as beings different and so are not radically different beings. It is in this sense that we would prefer to characterize the concept of Being as an analogical, rather than as a generic concept.

Our reluctance to look upon the concept of Being as a generic concept derives from: (a) the radically different senses in which—as shown above—different kinds of being are said to be beings; (b) the seeming impossibility of detecting any common property amongst beings which could be identified as *the* defining property of the concept of Being. Further, (c) 'Being' is not a predicate precisely in the same sense in which generic concepts like 'man', 'living being' or 'material thing' are: a point which brings out the element of the truth in the refusal of philosophers like Kant and Russell to treat 'existence' as a real predicate.

There is still another possible answer to the question, 'What sort

of concept is the concept of Being?' This answer implied in much of Martin Heidegger's writings is that the concept of Being is *not* the neutral notion of *Vorhandensein* nor the instrumentalistic notion of *Zuhandensein*, but the notion of *Dasein* as an ecstatic existing towards, or an openness to, the world and the transcendent. For us the notion of *Dasein*, fruitfully developed in the writings of Martin Heidegger (also the conception of for-itself in Jean-Paul Sartre) brings out the peculiar and distinguishing characteristics of a specific region of being, namely of what Sartre calls being for itself, but cannot be regarded as coextensive with the concept of Being. As a proposed definition of 'Being' it is too narrow. Existentialism cannot replace metaphysics. It is a fruitful new addition to it. It is not surprising therefore that both Heidegger and Sartre in their attempts to build up an ontology have gone beyond the narrow confines of existentialism.

In accordance with what has been said above there are *radically* different beings, beings which are not only different kinds of beings but which are *qua* beings different. What then is the subject matter of metaphysics, when we characterize it as the science of being *qua* being? Aristotle at several places[7] gives the following list of the different senses of 'being': (i) accidental being, (ii) being as truth; (iii) the categories; (iv) potential and actual being. Of these four, no systematic study of the first is possible, for knowledge in the strict sense is not possible with regard to accidental being. The second, i.e. being as truth, belongs to the scope of logic. It is the categories—and also potential and actual being—which rightly forms the subject matter of metaphysics. In view of the fact that the concepts of potentiality and actuality are amongst the categories, and taking into consideration many other statements of Aristotle in this connection, we may suggest that 'being *qua* being'—even taken as an analogical notion—means either:

(a) the Totality of all beings;
or (b) the Highest being, i.e., God;
or (c) the essences of the different regions of being;
or (d) the categories of the different regions of being.

In sense (b), metaphysics becomes theology. In senses (c) and (d), metaphysics becomes either ontology or transcendental philosophy. The sort of metaphysics which eventually Kant demonstrated to

be impossible as a body of knowledge is primarily concerned with the senses (a) and (b). Kant himself gives us a metaphysics or claims to have given one which is concerned with (d), and which he took as a propaedeutic to an immanent metaphysics of nature concerned with 'Being' in sense (c).[8]

To Kant's arguments against the possibility of a science of the totality of all beings, we may add the following one which seems to be a logical consequence of the concept of Being we have advocated in this paper. Since, as we have contended, beings are of radically different kinds, a totality of them is inconceivable. To be more specific, the totality of all beings would include not merely this world but all possible worlds. But world*s* are *eo ipso* radically different. Different things may or may not be radically different, different universals may or may not be radically different. But if there is an expression 'α' of which it holds good that different αs are *eo ipso* radically different then such an 'α' is 'world'. A totality of all possible worlds is a spurious concept, an illegitimate totality.

Metaphysics then, for us, is an ontology concerned with the different regions of being, and together with it a doctrine of categories. It is not necessary that a theory of categories should be part of a transcendental idealism like that of Kant.[9]

There is however still another possibility: metaphysics may be a metaphysics of the subjectively lived experience, a metaphysics of consciousness. But this sense of it may be regarded as included under ontology, though one may have reasons to call it the most fundamental ontology.

Thus metaphysics may be said to be not one unitary homogenous discipline, but a concept for a whole series of disciplines. They are all called 'metaphysics' in so far as they all investigate into being *qua* being. What is the unity amongst these disciplines, and consequently what makes metaphysics into one unitary pursuit?

What has been said in the preceding paragraphs is consistent with a great division of metaphysics into the objectively and the subjectively oriented metaphysics. This is not the same as the Kantian distinction between transcendent and immanent metaphysics. Nor does 'objective' here mean what is independent of consciousness. In fact, in this context, 'objective' signifies an attitude wherein the subject matter of investigation is the being as an object, whereas subjectively oriented metaphysics investigates consciousness not as an object

but as subjectively lived. Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, Advaita Vedānta, Sartre's phenomenology of the for-itself are examples of the latter; Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Platonism in general, the metaphysics of Whitehead, and much of the work of the early phenomenologists are examples of the former.

What interests us now is the possibility of connecting these two attitudes, the possibility of the transition from the one to the other. There are various possible steps of which the following seem to the most promising ones:

(1) It is possible to connect the two disciplines in so far as their contents are concerned. One may, for example, hold that all objects, all transcendent or immanent beings, are constituted in one pre-eminent region of being, namely in consciousness, so that the ontology of consciousness is the most fundamental ontology. Or, it may be held that the pre-eminently constituting region is not consciousness but *Dasein* in that exclusive sense in which Heidegger uses it. The result in any case would be an assimilation of objective metaphysics into some kind of subjective metaphysics. There may be many different kinds of detailed moves connected with this, the most interesting one being the attempt to correlate each type of being (objectively considered) to a characteristic mode of giveness. As against this entire procedure, it may be objected that the object is not reducible to the acts of consciousness through which it comes to be given, that the gap between the two cannot be bridged.

(2) Or, one may subsume the subjective metaphysics within the objective by construing the former as one of the regional ontologies. Again the chief objection against such a procedure is that it is bound to miss the peculiarity of subjectively lived experience, the difficulty in this case being just the reverse of that which was raised against (1).

If it is not possible thus to reduce either of the two great types of metaphysics to the other, is there any other means of passing from the one to the other? There would seem to be another way left. (3) It may be conceded to start with, that purely theoretically considered as speculative sciences, objective metaphysics and subjective metaphysics are on a par. There is nothing to choose, no decisive ground for giving preference or according a foundational status to either of the two. But apart from the question of *being*, the metaphysician is often guided by the question of *reality*. Now it may be contended that it is the search for reality which turns the meta-

physician away from the objective attitude towards the subjective, making the required transition possible and also showing the foundational character of the subjective. Now such an attempt makes use of a distinction between *being* and *reality* which may briefly be explicated. The essences have being but carry about them a sense of their unreality. Our sense of reality is, in the first place, intimately connected—as Kant rightly saw—with sensation.[10] The sensible particular is real in a preeminent sense. But the same sense of reality also attaches—as Kant did not explicitly say—to the subjective: so that we have two, radically different sources of our notion of *reality*. Of these two, the sensible particulars—as Aristotle emphasized[11]—cannot be made the subject matter of a theoretical study. The metaphysician therefore in his search for the real is led from mere beings—objective essences and categories—to the subjectively lived experience. The transition is motivated then by a search for reality. Metaphysics becomes not merely a science of being *qua* being, but a science of reality. All subjectively oriented metaphysics is thus an attempt to recapture the sense of reality associated with consciousness within theory.

We have indicated certain possible lines of investigation in metaphysics, without stopping to consider their contents, our purpose being to reflect on the nature of the discipline and not on the doctrines of any particular system. It is however consistent with this limitation imposed on our approach to draw attention to two methodological alternatives before metaphysics in each of its branches indicated above. *Metaphysics may be either speculative or descriptive.*

Speculative metaphysics *constructs* a system which is powerful enough to explain experience in its major outlines and in its most significant aspects. Of such a metaphysical system, Popper's contention holds good that it is not empirically falsifiable. We do not know *what sort of* empirical evidence would be able to falsify such a system, for the system, if it is powerful enough, is a priori such that empirical evidence will not affect it. I have two such systems in my mind: the system of Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind, and the system of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Every significant aspect of experience has a place, and in the light of that place receives an explanation (in a rather peculiar sense of 'explanation') within the system: the details, the particularities, the this and the mine are as much left

out here as in Aristotle's system, for they cannot be absorbed into a system at all (in a sense not even into a scientific system). Whatever thing you may single out will be shown to fall into one of the seven types of *padārthas* recognized in the Vaiśeṣika, and if only you admit this classification to start with (with all the accompanying definitions and rules) you have a fairly satisfactory conceptual framework to operate with. No wonder, the Hegelians, the Aristotelian-Thomists and the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas are some of the *happiest* philosophers. They do not experience that *tragic* sense which is born out of the realization that reflection perpetually fails to assimilate unreflective experience into itself.

The chief objection against speculative system building is not precisely that—for, I would think even existentialist reflection would fail just because it is reflection to absorb pre-reflective experience in all its fullness—but that speculative system building, in itself an absorbing game, breaks down at the point where the system may be said to begin. There is not one system; by the nature of the case, alternative systems are possible, and each system ultimately bases itself on assumptions which cannot be justified *within* the system. The choice of a system, then, has to be made on extra-systematic grounds (as e.g. in India often on grounds of one's heritage, tradition, *śruti* etc.).

The idea of descriptive metaphysics is free from both the groups of difficulties that beset speculative metaphysics: the difficulties connected with one's having to choose from amongst many possible and equally powerful systems, and the difficulties connected with the problem of *applying* a system to the facts of experience. For, descriptive metaphysics does not build a system (in Whitehead, it is a curious mixture of descriptive and speculative elements that leads to the system) and it never quite transcends the facts of experience. It, to be sure, reflects; its reflection is utterly different from the reflection involved in speculative thinking. It maintains the closest contact with experience, and with the help of reflection deciphers essences and essential structures which otherwise would not be explicit. It may also, in a more Kantian vein, seek to describe the actual structure of our thought, 'the massive central core of human thinking which has no history',[12] or 'the fundamental general structure of any conception of experience such as we can make intelligible

to ourselves'[13]. Descriptive metaphysics thus becomes phenomenology or some kind of transcendental philosophy.

NOTES

1. P.F. Strawson, *Individuals, An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*, London: Methuen, 1959, Introduction.
2. Immanuel Kant, *Werke*, edited by Ernst Cassirer, Berlin 1923, Vol. 8, p. 238.
3. Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Tubingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1953, p. 11.
4. Martin Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1951, p. 18.
5. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book K, ch. iii.
6. Ibid., Book Γ, ch. ii.
7. Ibid., Book E, ch. ii; Book Δ, ch. vii.
8. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B 869–74 (Kant, *Werke*, Vol. 3, 562–5).
9. Modern researches like that of H. Pichler have shown that Kant's doctrine of categories was not a radical departure from Wolff's. The contents of the categories remain largely the same, only now they are assimilated to the framework of transcendental philosophy.
10. Compare Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B 207–8, 'Antizipationen der Wahrnehmung'.
11. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book E, ch. ii; Book Δ, ch. vii.
12. P.F. Strawson, *Individuals*, Introduction.
13. P.F. Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense, An Essay on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, London: Methuen, 1966, p. 44.

3
The Concept of Intuition

My purpose in this essay is first to make the concept of intuition suspect by exhibiting the almost hopeless ambiguities and equivocations which have clustered around it, but then also to attempt a rehabilitation of the concept and to determine its role in a theory of knowledge. To start with, we may, for the limited purpose of this essay, decide not to take into consideration what may be called the non-philosophical uses of 'intuition'. Thus one hears of poetic intuition, religious intuition, mystic intuition, the intuition of the scientist or intuitions of common sense. That we propose to leave these out of consideration is not by any means to be construed as amounting to a denial or even an underestimation of their importance for philosophy. On the contrary, consideration of these non-philosophical uses may very well serve both to correct and to throw light on certain deeply rooted philosophical beliefs. However, our purpose here being more modest, we may confine attention to the major philosophical concepts of intuition.

Those who speak of intuition as a form of knowledge contrast it with knowledge that is not intuitive. One way of bringing out the meanings of 'intuition' in various philosophical systems is to examine the nature of this contrast, in other words to ask how intuitive knowledge is sought to be contrasted with the non-intuitive. As soon as we try to do this we are faced with a most bewildering variety of views. Since this essay is not intended to be a historical study, we may represent the main ways of doing this contrast in the tabular form given below:

Intuitive Knowledge	*Non-intuitive Knowledge*
1. Immediate awareness.	1. Mediate knowledge.
2. The object is given.	2. The object is constructed.
3. The knowledge is non-conceptual.	3. The knowledge is conceptual.
4. The knowledge has absolute certainty.	4. The knowledge may have only relative certainty.
5. The knowledge is concrete.	5. The knowledge is abstract.
6. The knowledge is of the unique individual.	6. The knowledge is of the general.
7. The knowledge is knowledge by identity.	7. The knowledge is knowledge by difference.
8. The knowledge is disinterested.	8. The knowledge is motivated.
9. The knowledge is an ecstatic awareness.	9. The knowledge is detached, cold and intellectual.

An inspection of these pairs of contrasts would show that they are not all mutually consistent. Some of them overlap, some are clearly incompatible with others. Let us consider some of them.

The concepts of 'immediacy' and 'givenness' are as difficult to explicate as any other. Apprehension of the given—which is Kant's conception of intuition—need not necessarily be of the unique particular; there are philosophers who hold that the universal essence is as much capable of being given as the particular instance of it. Further, it is not necessary that the given is that of which we have absolute certainty: there can be absolute certainty as much about what is inferred as about what is given. Nor is awareness of the given a knowledge by identity: on the contrary, the very idea of the given implies the distinction between what is given and to whom it is given. Thus the pairs of contrast 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 do not coincide.[1] In the case of the last two pairs in our list, there is an explicit incompatibility: while the one characterizes intuitive knowledge as disinterested, the other regards it as ecstatic and condemns non-intuitive knowledge as being cold and detached.

While for the Buddhists, the object of intuition is the bare particular, the *svalakṣaṇa,* which is temporal but not spatial, for Kant it is the sensation which is ordered in space and time. Whereas for many

modern philosophers what is given is the sense datum, according to the Nyāya what is directly and immediately perceived is the physical object. The phenomenologists go even further: for them the given is not an atom, be it a sense datum or a physical object, it is always a field characterized by inner and outer horizons, not something fully determinate, nor an indeterminate mass but a determinate core with indeterminate awaiting further determinations. For Plato and Husserl, there is besides empirical intuition of sensible particulars also an eidetic intuition of universal essences. How far removed is that from Bergson's intuition whose object is the living organization in its individuality and, at its highest, the flow of creative life, but in no case the ideal unchanging universal which he regards as a construct of the spatialized intellect! And there is of course the conception of intuition according to which to know is to be, the knower and the known become one, *brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati*.

Thus as objects of intuitive knowledge we find philosophers advancing the claims of one or more of the following: sense–datum, unique individuals, universal essences, values, life force (whatever that may mean), self, the Absolute.

What then are we to make of the concept of intuition amidst this bewildering variety of views (and of course, mine is a fairly simplified picture, for one can add to the complexity of the situation)?

There are various possible moves by which one may seek to rescue the concept of intuition from the dangers inherent in the situation which we have portrayed above. Of these I shall mention two, both of which I consider important. Of these two I shall, in this paper, defend the second one. The first move which I shall immediately expound will not be rejected but will be set aside for our present purpose. The two moves, as will be at once clear, are not mutually incompatible.

One may, in the first place, seek to bring order into this choas by introducing the notion of *grades* of intuition. Such a notion is inherent in Sri Aurobindo's writings: Sri Aurobindo, of all intuitionist philosophers, shows an awareness of the ambiguities of the notion of intuition, and we may follow this clue without necessarily expounding his views on the matter. There is surely no one way of arranging

the various senses of 'intuition' in the form of a series of various grades of intuition, for any such ordering will presuppose an ontological ordering of grades of reality. One may start with sense-intuition, to be followed in that order by vital intuition, aesthetic intuition, logical intuition (of meanings and logical relations), intellectual intuition (of Hegel), eidetic intuition (of Husserl), categorial intuition (also of Husserl), intuition as that immediate experience of reality of which it is true to say that to know is to be (whatever again that may mean).

As said above, we cannot here proceed further along this way, and that for two reasons. For one thing, the purpose of this paper is not to decide what we intuit and what we do not, and you cannot set up a hierarchy of intuitions unless and until you have decided what those things are which one may be said to intuit. For another, the ontological presuppositions of such a hierarchy need to be built up and this is not the place to do that. So leaving this promising way, we may now turn to the second.

The second way by which one may try to determine the *concept* of intuition is to search for some generic property which could serve as the *defining* characteristic of that concept. Here again the relation of intuition to non-intuitive knowledge comes in for discussion. While we were, earlier in his paper, concerned with the *contrast* between the two, we shall presently be concerned with their *relation*.

The relation between intuitive knowledge and non-intuitive knowledge may be formulated on either of the following lines:

Intuition may be taken either (i) as the starting point of, and so as preceding thought (Aristotle, Kant); or (ii) as what also characterizes thought itself (Hegel); or (iii) as the culmination of thought (Bradley); or (iv) as being totally distinct from, coordinate with, and even opposed to it (Bergson).

A full discussion of these four views would take us beyond the limits of the present paper. However, the following brief remarks may suffice to show us the way. The intuition which, according to Kant, precedes thought is bare sensation, and is not itself knowledge, it at best enters into knowledge as a component of it. The intuition which, according to Aristotle, precedes thought is knowledge, it is the immediate perception of the truths of axioms and other self-evident propositions but it precedes not thought in general but only a particular kind of thinking, namely, demonstration (as in geometry).

It is not altogether certain whether we do have intuition of such self-evident axioms, but even granted that we have it is knowledge and not mere sensation or feeling. We are thus led to a distinction between two different types of uses of 'intuition': sometimes it is used to designate an experience *qua* experience, sometimes it is used to designate a specific kind of knowledge. This distinction is both interesting and important. A knowledge is also an experience, to know is to have an experience. But to consider a knowledge *qua* knowledge is not to consider it as an experience. Though to know is to have an experience, the reverse does not hold good. To have an experience is not *eo ipso* to know. We are here concerned with intuition as a mode of knowledge, and not with experiences which though not amounting to knowledge may yet be called 'intuition'.

Even Bergson who set up what may seem to be a total opposition between intellect and intuition defines 'intuition' as a sort of 'intellectual sympathy' or as a synthesis of intellect and instinct. The point to be stressed is that no experience can by itself amount to knowledge unless it be somehow related to the life of non-intuitive thought. This point is taken care of in the second of the four possible views mentioned above: according to Hegel, thought itself, without ceasing to be thought, becomes intuitive. He rightly sees that there is no opposition between the discursivity of thought and its intuitive character, but he neatly assigns to these two functions two different stadia in the dialectical development of thought. In a sense he does feel there is an opposition, the same thought in the same phase cannot be both, discursive thought can be intuitive only in a higher stage of its development. The opposition is more overtly recognized by Bradley for whom discursivity is a defining characteristic of thought, so that though thought culminates in intuition it ceases to be thought thereby.

In view of our above remarks, two central points stand out. In the first place, we are concerned with intuition as a mode of knowledge, and not merely as an experience. In the second place, as a mode of knowledge intuition should have to be closely related to non-intuitive thought. Precisely how is the question.

Following Husserl we may distinguish between symbolic thought and intuitive thought. Thought is symbolic when its meaning intention is empty, not filled in with intuitive content. It is intuitive when the meaning intention is fulfilled. This distinction is not the

same as the Hegelian distinction between discursive thinking and intuitive thinking. The latter distinction pertains to two different stadia in the development of thought, the Husserlian distinction concerns the movement of thought with one and the same sphere. Even within ordinary thinking, symbolic thinking tends to pass over into intuitive thinking, empty meaning intentions tend to be fulfilled. This distinction no doubt reminds us, because of the verbal similarity, of the Kantian dictum that concepts without intuitions are empty. But the verbal similarity should not make us blind to the deep difference in the underlying conceptions. The Kantian doctrine is based on a doctrine of two heterogenous faculties as two sources of knowledge. The present distinction does not presuppose any such doctrine. It simply takes note of the actual movement of thought. Some of the difficulties arising out of the Kantian dualism are herewith avoided. The difficulty, for example, regarding how precisely two heterogenous faculties could cooperate to produce knowledge simply does not arise here. Intention and fulfilment have an inner relationship, the former points towards the latter. In the dynamics of thinking, intention presses towards its own fulfilment; this urge may be satisfied, it may also be frustrated.[2]

It is also free from the Kantian sensationalism which Kant imbibed from Hume, from the doctrine namely that all intuitive content is provided by sensations. On the contrary, the phenomenological distinction makes room for different types of fulfilment. The meaning intention constituting a certain symbolic thought itself determines the sort of fulfilment it *needs* (which however does not entail that any such fulfilment is in all cases possible). Thus different kinds of fulfilling experience (or, what Waismann calls different strata of verification) are very well possible. Indeed, as Husserl laid down as the cardinal principle of phenomenology, every type of object has its own distinctive type of ordinary mode of givenness. In this way our second move comes to coincide, in its consequence, with the first move which directly sought to work out a hierarchy of intuitions.

We have thus arrived at a generic characterization of intuitions, to whatever level they may belong. Any intuition, in order to be both an intuition and a knowledge, must be the fulfilment of some prior symbolic thinking, or some empty meaning intention. An experience which is not capable of being intended by any meaning

intention as its fulfilment is not therefore to be called intuitive knowledge, though such an experience, as an experience, is an undeniable fact. Its cognitive value however depends upon that if it can be correlated to some meaning intention as the fulfilment of that intention.

While thus we may speak of a great many different orders of fulfilment experiences, amongst all these there is one kind of experience which occupies a central place. This is our normal perceptual experience. No wonder, therefore, that all accounts of intuition have in some way or other taken recourse to the perceptual model. One speaks of 'seeing' God, of 'seeing' values, of 'seeing' the truth, and so on. The precise implications of the perceptual model cannot however be developed in this paper. It is however good to bear this in mind that even non-sensuous perception is called 'perception', and that our very concept of 'perception' is derived from ordinary perception of physical objects and other persons around us. Perception in this very ordinary sense may well claim to be the paradigm case of intuition, other intuitions are so, one may contend, in so far as they share with it some of its distinctive characteristics. But I should desist from drawing any such conclusion at this stage.

NOTES

1. For further discussion of this point, compare my 'The Given' in the Proceedings of the Delhi Philosophical Colloquium India International Centre, New Delhi, 1962.
2. For the concepts of meaning intention and fulfilment, see my *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964).

4

Kalidas Bhattacharyya as a Metaphysician

Those of us who had the good fortune of listening to Kalidas Bhattacharyya's lectures on metaphysics and theory of knowledge at the University of Calcutta during the late forties and also of taking part in the philosophical discussion that continued, seemingly endlessly, in his office during the years he served at the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, and later at the Viśva Bhāratī (and which were, to our utter regret, interrupted when he took over the Vice-Chancellorship at the last-mentioned institution), would fondly recall the exciting experience of being in the presence of, and participating in, a truly authentic philosophical discourse. If the authenticity of philosophical discourse consists in submitting to the rigor of concepts and yet also in a dissolution of the sense of authority and the consequent possibility of genuine communicative participation, then I must say that I have not found another philosopher who can generate philosophical discourse in such an authentic manner.

In this introductory essay, I intend to bring out some salient features of Kalidas Bhattacharyya's philosophy. In his case, this indeed is difficult to do, for more than in the case of most philosophers, Kalidas Bhattacharyya's philosophy is almost inseparable from his on-going process of philosophizing. However, the effort is worth making. For many of us, trying to reflect on Kalidas Bhattacharyya's philosophy is, in varying degrees, reflecting on the genesis of our own thoughts—he has played such an important role in giving shape to the way we think. It is reflecting on one of the major forces in contemporary Indian philosophy. In various ways, Kalidas Bhattacharyya has been a powerful force in moulding the thoughts of the younger generation of Indian philosophers—not as much by his own system as by engaging them in a genuine process of dialogue.

In Kalidas Bhattacharyya's lectures during the forties and also in the two major publications of those years[1], there was one central thesis which he sought to amplify, illustrate and defend by showing its application in various domains and to various philosophical issues. This is the thesis that in philosophy there are, in the long run, theoretically undecidable alternatives. Between realism and idealism—to the controversy between their advocates he devoted a great deal of his time and attention—no final decision can be made, no decisive refutation of any is possible. They are, at the end, based on commitments which are theoretically neither defensible nor refutable. As a consequence of this elaborately worked out position, Kalidas Bhattacharyya's lectures and writings of this period were marked by attempts to defend every basic philosophical position against all possible criticisms, to give it as plausible a formulation as possible, to trace it back to the strongest arguments in its favor and to lay bare its most basic presuppositions. The roots of this liberalism lie, no doubt, in Jaina doctrine of *naya*, but also in the thoughts of his father K.C. Bhattacharyya. In this essay I do not intend to go into this aspect of Kalidas Bhattacharyya's thought. I rather want to restrict myself to his later thinking, as documented in the books published since the sixties.

Kalidas Bhattacharyya is essentially a metaphysician. But he wants to take into account all anti-metaphysical arguments of our times. Furthermore, his metaphysics is deeply traditional, rooted in Advaita Vedānta and Śaivism. But he is willing, and in fact eager to learn what he can from the principal contemporary philosophical movements viz. logical empiricism, linguistic analysis and phenomenology. His basic commitment to orthodoxy is founded on a prior liberalism. The merely liberal who revels in ceaseless evaluation of abstract possibilities is, as he writes in an essay, 'A modern Defence of Orthodoxy', 'a useless gymnast'.[2] Liberalism should be, for him, only a preparation for recovering security in either the old accepted view, or 'if conversion has taken place, in another'.

Further, true to his basic commitment to phenomenology, he wants to avoid any hasty system-building which refuses to take into account other dimensions of our experience. For example, although basically his metaphysics is idealistic, as we shall see, he rejects an idealism that, at the very beginning, disavows the objective attitude. 'Our normal attitude to life is objective.' He writes,

'To start with the objective attitude, to think in terms of the object, is at least less confusing than idealistic effusions and is therefore initially a more reliable method of procedure.'[3] Although he does not himself give us a system of metaphysics, he does tell us in broad outlines what metaphysics is about.

Metaphysics, which he sometimes identifies with philosophy, is concerned with the non-empirical, the a priori. The non-empirical which metaphysics deals with is initially discovered as the structure of the empirical, but subsequently recognized as autonomous. Metaphysics is not, according to Kalidas Bhattacharyya, construction of a system. It does not aim at explaining the empirical. Its aim rather is to *discover* the non-empirical and the a priori. The method for such discovery is reflective, phenomenological, transcendental and intuitive in one.[4]

One of the pervasive concerns of Kalidas Bhattacharyya has been with the nature and function of philosophical reflection and its relation to unreflective experience.[5] The way he formulates the issue is this: if reflection leads to knowledge of anything, such knowledge must be of something which all along has been there, for reflection is not felt as bringing into being what it lays bare. If the object of reflective knowledge was all along there, why is it that it was not perceived, recognized, known in pre-reflective experience? What does reflection do in order to bring it to light? After rejecting various answers to this question, Kalidas Bhattacharyya offers his own solution, which in fact constitutes a corner-stone of his thought. What reflection brings to light was there in pre-reflective experience, but only as undistinguishedly *fused*. This state of fusion is not a mere subjective failure to distinguish, not a mere confusion, but rather an objective implicitness. Reflection is an act of distinguishing, whose objective correlate is the distinct entity *qua* distinct. Space, time or self, which are objects of metaphysical knowledge, are all given in pre-reflective experience, but only as undistinguished from, and fused with the empirical world. It is the task of metaphysics to let them emerge in their distinctness and with their full autonomy. Any being of which the same holds is a metaphysical entity.

There are two more things we need to keep in mind in order to appreciate the originality of Kalidas Bhattacharyya's thinking. First, the distinctness and autonomy of the metaphysical entity is such that this entity, though objective, is at the same time the correlate of the

subjective act of distinguishing i.e. of reflection. Reflection does not produce the distinctness. If the latter depends upon the former, this relation of dependence is not unlike that which holds good between comparative properties such as 'larger than' and the acts of comparing, or between the illusory snake and the illusory perception. It seems to me that the relation which Kalidas Bhattacharyya seeks to isolate is that which holds good between an intentional act and its noema in Husserlian phenomenology. The sense or noema is objective, and yet is also the correlate of an act. There is, it would seem, a difference between the two cases: the case of the dependence of a comparative feature on the appropriate act of comparison, and the case of the dependence of an illusory snake on the illusory perception. The comparative feature is objective in a sense in which the illusory snake is not. The same comparative feature can be the correlate of numerically many different acts of comparison, whereas it is difficult to see in what sense identically the same illusory snake may be perceived by different percipients or by the same percipient on numerically different occasions. It is the former that comes closer to the Husserlian correlation, and more appropriate for Kalidas Bhattacharyya's purpose.

In the second place, it would be a mistake to say that there is an x that passes from the state of fusion to the state of distinctness. Although it is the indistinct x which becomes the distinct x, x *proper* is x as distinct. 'X as indistinct' is not analysable into x and indistinctness. X appears as x only through reflection, so that when speaking of 'indistinct x' we are in fact describing unreflective experience in terms of what is revealed in reflection. Unreflective experience however reveals an unanalysable whole. Reflection distinguishes within this whole a distinct entity x which, in retrospect, we ascribe to unreflective experience, as though it was there all along in an indistinct state. At least at one place Kalidas Bhattacharyya writes that these essences were given in unreflective experience as generic images or schemata.[6]

Kalidas Bhattacharyya often illustrates his thesis with the help of the concept of form. In the object of pre-reflective experience, form is not distinguished *qua* form. It is rather fused or implicit. Reflection distinguishes it as form. The perceived table, for example, is not matter plus form—the form 'table'—but is rather a not further analysable whole. It would be philosophical commonplace to say

that when the form is abstracted from this whole, what is left over is the indefinite matter. But Kalidas Bhattacharyya totally rejects this thesis, and does so on good grounds. According to him, 'The table is the fused state of the table-form, not that form plus matter'.[7] Abstraction, as Husserl argued in the Second Logical Investigation, is not real separation. What is left over, the remainder after reflection distinguishes the form 'table', is the same total object of pre-reflective experience. Wherever this holds good, we seem to have a typically metaphysical entity, which Kalidas Bhattacharyya often calls an 'essence', or 'ideality'. This fact that even when A is taken away from an x what remains over is not x-A, but that x itself is precisely what, according to him, is meant by 'transcendence'.[8]

Kalidas Bhattacharyya does not regard the essences as 'real'. In order to explain why essences are not real, he makes use of a general principle which runs as follows: 'nothing that is distinguishable in itself and yet constitutes another reality can be real'.[9] A chair is made of wood. The wood constitutes the chair, but can never be distinguished in itself, it is always a wooden something, it is therefore real. But an essence, though it constitutes real things, is yet distinguishable in itself by reflection: it is therefore not real. To be more specific, *qua* essences they are not real. The essences were real *qua* constituting another real entity. But they are not for that reason unreal either. Consequently, Kalidas Bhattacharyya regards them as possibilities which *demand* to be realized.[10] What sort of reality do they demand? Or, in other words, how is this demand to be satisfied?

The rationalist answer would be: even if a single essence taken by itself is a mere possibility, a coherent system of such essences must be real. Kalidas Bhattacharyya rejects this answer.[11] The resulting system of essences would only be another coherent and complex essence which has no more reasons to be real than the single essence had to begin with. Nor would the empiricist answer do, the essence cannot be put back to existence in the world of unreflective acceptance—for the latter cannot contain an essence *qua* essence. He therefore looks for an entity such that it is real but not an item in the world of pre-reflective acquaintance. There is only one thing which satisfies these requirements, i.e. which is discovered in reflection and yet is felt as having been present prior to that discovery. (We have noted earlier that an essence was not, *qua* essence, present prior to reflective discovery.) This is nothing other than pure con-

sciousness. Although discovered by reflection, pure consciousness was present, in unreflective experience, as the enjoyment of one's own mental states, an enjoyment (Kalidas Bhattacharyya borrows the term from Josiah Royce, but uses it in the vedāntic sense of *kevalasākṣivedyatva*) which was not itself another state.

There is still another difference between pure consciousness and an essence: we have noted that an essence, though objective, is the correlate of a subjective act of reflection. Pure consciousness, though discovered in reflection, is not correlate of another consciousness. The reflective distinguishing of pure consciousness and the pure consciousness that is thus distinguished are one and the same.[12]

Thus Kalidas Bhattacharyya is led to his final thesis: when the essences demand reality, it is to pure consciousness that they refer or lay claim.[13] '...the reality that is demanded by objective idealities is in the end the intrinsic reality of subjectivity'.[14] We need to ask at this point: what precisely is meant by this? In what precise sense are we to understand the statement that the essences refer to, lay claim to, the reality of pure consciousness? This is indeed one of the most difficult questions in connection with interpreting Kalidas Bhattacharyya's thought. Nicolai Hartmann, of all philosophers belonging to the phenomenological school, recognized a certain 'nearness to consciousness' (*Nähe zum Bewusstsein*) as characterizing the idealities.[15] But by this Hartmann meant that consciousness has a direct access to ideal objectivities, an access which may be characterized as an intuition, an intuition of a higher order: but it would be a mistake, according to Hartmann, to suppose that idealities do not possess an autonomous being of their own. On the contrary, he recognizes the category of 'ideal actuality', which implies that the idealities are not mere possibilities. Certainly, he would be far from assimilating all essences to values, as Kalidas Bhattacharyya seems to be doing when he regards them as possessing an inherent demand to be realized. A closer relation to consciousness may be found in the case of the Husserlian noemata, but the latter are to be carefully distinguished from essences strictly so called. Perhaps, Kalidas Bhattacharyya's thesis may be understood as an attempt to assimilate 'essences' to 'meanings', and then to trace meanings back to their original source in the domain of consciousness—a move that certainly characterizes Husserlian transcendental phenomenology.[16]

The thesis that essences are meanings[17] and have their constitution in pure consciousness is carried through in two stages. First, essences are constituted in thought, and thought is (implicit) speech[18]. Essences therefore are constituted by language which, in the long run, is but speaking consciousness. An anti-essentialist may precisely use this linguistic constitution of essences to make the point that there are in fact no essences, which may very well be the Buddhist view and also seems to have been Merleau-Ponty's view as well.[19] Kalidas Bhattacharyya does not draw this conclusion, chiefly because he has a truly phenomenological concept of constitution and does not regard constitution as production. We need not here go into his interesting thoughts on language. It would suffice to mention that, for him, essences are intuited, but the intuition of essences is linguistic.[20] The next step is taken by maintaining that speaking consciousness makes a demand for, and in this sense, is founded on pure, non-linguistic consciousness, which though not describable is immediately enjoyed—not merely in specially cultivated attitudes, but always as a fringe around everyday consciousness.

It is important to note that this is a theory of constitution of essences, but not of the everyday world unreflective acceptance. The *actual* world, as Kalidas Bhattacharyya wants to call the latter, does contain analogues of the essences, perhaps what can be called their schemata: actual space, actual time, actual self and empirical universals. We have noted the sense in which essences are said to belong to the actual world. There is a sense in which the essences constitute the actual world, there is another sense in which the essences are constituted in pure consciousness. Neither of these senses of 'constitution' annuls the autonomy of that which is constituted.

Especially with regard to perception, Kalidas Bhattacharyya recognizes its claim to validity as being *sui generis* and as 'natural'.[21] The reliability of perception, despite errors and illusions, is not matched by memory and thought. Both memory and thought *transform* the fact that was perceived. Memory 'transforms' it into an image, thought into meaning. The sense of 'transformation' again is peculiar. It is neither subjective and arbitrary, nor purely objective change. In 'thought', the domain of facticity is transcended. Thought, and therefore language, constitutes new entities and structures such as the predicative relation and the inferential 'therefore'. In this constitution, thought reveals its *freedom* from the

actuality of the given. It constitutes pure possibilities as an autonomous domain.

Kalidas Bhattacharyya's ultimate concern in metaphysics would seem to be both a theory of freedom and a theory of the possibility of realizing that freedom. Although thoughts on freedom pervade all his later writings, in this exposition I will draw only upon one of his latest essays on that theme.[22] This essay is entitled 'Nature and Freedom.' In it, Kalidas Bhattacharyya both explores the meaning of freedom and brings out the relation between nature and freedom. To begin with, freedom for him is trans-natural. Nature is understood as the totality of things in space and/or time and subject to causal determination. Material movement (both macro and mirco), as well as behaviour of living beings considered as biological organisms, are taken to be 'natural'. Human action, when and in so far as it caters to biological needs and yields to natural pressures, is 'natural', it can be 'mechanically' predicted. But even in such cases, the counterfactual 'He might not have let himself be influenced by pressure', makes sense. This counterfactual is 'realized' in the attitude of non-attachment, in self-conscious refusal to submit to pressure (external and internal), in withdrawal from nature. It is with negative withdrawal, standing back, detachment, that freedom begins. Positively, freedom points to something beyond nature, which may be called 'spiritual'. The very possibility of such standing back shows that nature is not all 'natural', or—more appropriately—that there is a 'hole' within nature itself, as Kalidas Bhattacharyya puts it.[23] It is also suggestive of a meeting point of nature and spirit. The withdrawal and the standing back are acts on the part of the natural man, and yet they are not amenable to purely natural, mechanistic explanation.

The same is also true of the living body. Body is natural, in so far as it is subject to natural, nomological laws. But the living body, in so far as it is also lived body, marks a level of subjectivity with which, as the late K.C. Bhattacharyya wrote, 'the first hint of this freedom' (=freedom as detachment) is reached.[24] Kalidas Bhattacharyya goes further than his father: for him, living body is consciously used by man for freedom. It is the first means of freedom, so that 'the body that is consciously used as a means is no 'mere part of Nature'.[25] Bodily movement which is self-consciously introduced with a view to bring about change in nature, is not entirely Nature's own:

'somehow at some point it has originated freely and literally out of nothing'.[26] In fact, the mind-body complex of man, which he calls 'his own nature' is a Leibnizian monad, a microcosm reflecting the whole of nature within itself, and so is not a part of nature. For, 'no part can possibly present the whole'.[27]

Positive freedom may be understood, and cultivated, in many different levels, of which two are emphasized by Kalidas Bhattacharyya: these are 'reason' and 'reflection'. Reason brings about the first stage of positive freedom by 'rationalizing' nature, making it amenable to intersubjective communicability and universalizing the natural principles that operate in mental life in its natural course. Reason operates both in the cognitive and conative domains. In the former, it operates in the form of logical principles, in the latter as moral norms. In both, reason confers objectivity, removes selfishness, universalizes, and transforms 'natural pressures' into acceptable 'social norms'. At this level, social norms do not oppose freedom. To the extent, these norms develop through rationalization and are not felt as having been foisted from outside, they are means of freedom. Kalidas Bhattacharyya does not adequately distinguish, in this context, between the 'natural' process by which externally foisted norms are 'internalized' and the self-conscious rational process by which the rationality of a set of norms may come to be realized by an individual. In fact, for Kalidas Bhattacharyya, an altogether 'naturalistic' account of social norms is not possible.[28]

Whereas reason is the highest level of human mentality, there is a higher level of positive freedom, which may be called reflective consciousness. Reflective consciousness withdraws from nature, either in the manner of phenomenological 'epoche' or in the manner of Yoga; it realizes its own autonomy and purity. But it may go even further, and seek to reduce nature to its own construction. Nature, then, becomes 'Nature-as-intended'. To demonstrate that the world is constituted in pure consciousness would be the goal of this route, but Kalidas Bhattacharyya is aware of the limitations of this procedure. He recognizes that even if in principle such constitution may be worked out, it cannot be extended to the details. The phenomenologist fails to explain, 'how freedom could construct all the *perceivable details* of his own nature or of Nature outside'.[29]

In the long run, for Kalidas Bhattacharyya there are several alternative modes of realizing freedom. Freedom may be either transcendent

or immanent. Transcendent freedom, in either of its two subforms, cognitive and conative, transcends natural life; it purports to be entirely a life of spirit. Immanent freedom may be either transcendent-and-immanent, or wholly immanent. In the former case, freedom lies in 'organizing nature in accordance with itself, not in seeking a special being of its own'.[30] In the latter case, freedom is construed as a new dimension of nature itself, nature itself at its best. It would be an interesting task to try to identify these major types in the history of thought. For Kalidas Bhattacharyya, the choice between these types of freedom cannot be rational. There cannot be any external criterion by which one may choose one rather than the others. Reason itself is a type of freedom, it cannot be used to choose from amongst the various types of freedom. Ultimately, the choice has to be existential. We are back with the conception of an ultimate 'alternation' in philosophical thinking with which Kalidas Bhattacharyya's philosophical thinking had taken its start.

This brief exposition of some of the most promising thoughts of Kalidas Bhattacharyya cannot give the readers any idea of the extreme richness and vitality of the philosophical reasonings which sustain them. For that one has of course to read his works. But more importantly, one has to converse with him on philosophical matters. It is also necessary to add that these should not be construed as representing the final form of his thought which is still in the process of growing and developing.

NOTES

1. *Object, Content and Relation,* Calcutta,
   Alternative Standpoints in Philosophy, Calcutta,
2. Kalidas Bhattacharyya, *Philosophy, Logic and Language*, Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1965, p. 87. This book will be referred, in these notes, as PLL.
3. PLL, p. 100.
4. PLL, pp. 15, 93.
   Also: Kalidas Bhattacharyya, *Presuppositions of Science and Philosophy & Other Essays* (to be henceforth referred as PSP), Santiniketan, 1972, p. 173.
5. See the essay 'The Nature of Reflection in Metaphysics', PLL.

6. PLL, p. 55.
7. PLL, p. 103.
8. PSP, p. 168.
9. PLL, p. 55–6.
10. PLL, pp. 55, 57.
11. PLL, p. 58.
12. PLL, p. 60.
13. PLL, p. 61.
14. PLL, p. 32.
15. Nicolai Hartmann, *Zur Grundlegung der Ontologie*, Meisenheim am Glan, 1948 (Dritte Auflage), Ch. 43, Sec. a.
16. There is also another strand of thought that fits in well with the idea of alternation. According to this, metaphysical entities may be regarded either objectively or subjectively—an irreducible alternation. Cp. especially, PSP, p. 169.
17. Kalidas Bhattacharyya does not explicitly identify meanings with essences. But his discussion of 'meaning' (see esp. PLL, pp. 82ff.) would support such an identification.
18. PLL, pp. 41–3.
19. Cp. Merleau-Ponty: 'The separated essences are those of language.' *Phenomenology of Perception*, E. Tr. by C. Smith, New York: Humanities Press, Preface, p. xv.
20. PLL, p. 41.
21. PLL, p. 79.
22. Kalidas Bhattacharyya, 'Nature and Freedom', in: *Philosophica*, Calcutta, Vol. 4, no. 3 and 4, 1975.
23. *Philosophica*, Vol. 4, no. 3, p. 23.
24. K.C. Bhattacharyya, *Subject as Freedom*, Amalner, Bombay: Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1930, p. 103.
25. *Philosophica*, Vol. 4, no. 3, p. 18.
26. Ibid., p. 18.
27. Ibid., p. 19.
28. *Philosophica*, Vol. 4, no. 4, p. 11.
29. Ibid., p. 9.
30. Ibid., p. 21.

5
Some Thoughts on Daya Krishna's 'Three Myths'

For many years past Daya Krishna has been, in a series of highly provocative papers, questioning many of the received and taken-for-granted ideas about Indian philosophy. It is a sign of the sad state of philosophy in India, that these challenges have gone mostly unheeded and that the same clichés continue to be rehearsed despite Daya's critique. I think he has succeeded in showing that the characterization of Indian philosophy as 'spiritual' is shallow, unthinking, and after all a myth. Two other myths about Indian philosophy that Daya drew attention to are: the claim that Indian philosophy is based on the authority of the *Vedas*, and the claim that Indian philosophy consists of a fixed number of clearly delimited 'schools'. These two critiques have been elaborated in a number of papers. One of them entitled 'Vedānta—Does it Really Mean anything?' argues that it is impossible to define—either by identifying a set of doctrines or by specifying a body of founding texts—what 'Vedānta' stands for. The enormous difficulty of identifying a text, or a corpus of texts, has been one of Daya's chief concerns: what, after all, are the *Vedas*? The *Mantras*? Or the *Brāhmaṇas*? What are the *Upaniṣads*? He wants to press the point that the identity, and identifiability, of these, and other subordinate texts have been just taken for granted, but once the questions are raised as to what they are, are they sharply demarcated from other coordinate or superordinate texts? One cannot deny, as was well recognized in antiquity, that many of the texts were but results of arbitrary compilations, displacements and revisions to which later commentators gave the stamp of unified textuality. This last recognition inevitably presses the point, whether 'a new way of looking at the texts' is not necessary ('The Vedic Corpus: some questions', p. 126).

I am, as I have just said, in agreement with Daya's critique of

the facile characterization of Indian philosophy as 'spiritual'. So I will make a few brief remarks on this matter before considering the questions concerning 'authority' and the 'philosophical schools'. With regard to the latter, again, I will not even attempt to consider Daya's many and varied questionings about the 'textuality' of the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. I will not undertake that task, for it lies outside my area of competence. I just do not know the material that well, from the philosophical and historical points of view. Granting Daya's critiques provisionally, I will ask if there is still not something about those claims—the claims about 'authority' and 'schools'—that cannot be saved.

First, then, as to the so-called 'spiritua'' character of Indian philosophy. Philosophy—or, even the *darśanas*—whatever else they may be, embody thoughts, and (i) thoughts themselves may be, ontologically speaking, regarded as spiritual (*geistige*) entities; or, (ii) they may have, as their subject matter, something spiritual; or (iii) acts of thinking, of which those thoughts are products, may be said to be spiritual; or (iv) thinking, specific to the *darśanas* may be, indeed is, claimed to be able to lead up to a goal that is spiritual; or (v) it may finally be said that one central task of such thinking is to demonstrate the possibility of achieving such a spiritual goal. Let us look at these alternatives. The first is useless, for if thoughts, *qua* thoughts, are spiritual, then all thoughts are so, and not merely the thoughts embodied in the *darśanas*. The second is more helpful, for it is indeed the case that an important concern of the *darśanas* is the nature of the *ātman*, and this certainly, if there is any, is a spiritual entity. The word 'spiritual' has no specific meaning, but without having to decide upon that issue now, it is best to ask, which term in Sanskrit does the word 'spiritual' (or 'spirit') translate, which term, that is to say, which one uses in describing the *ātman* that one would want to render into 'spiritual'? In the large spectrum of discussions on the nature of *ātman* that one finds in the literature of the *darśanas*, the issues that stand out are: is the *ātman* essentially individuated or is it one universal entity present in all sentient beings? Is consciousness (*cit*) an essential, intrinsic property of *ātman*, or is it an extrinsic, contingent property of it? Is *ātman* distinct from the body, different also from the psycho-physical complex? Is *ātman* the referent of the word 'I', or not? Is *ātman* eternal or non-eternal? Which of these issues is the question, obfuscating to say the least,

is *ātman* something 'spiritual'? I think the term 'spiritual' has long historical links with some concepts (and terms) in Judeo-Christian theology; it does not help to appreciate the deep features of Indian thinking. The same scepticism as I have voiced in the preceding remarks may be raised with regard to acts of thinking. That these are spiritual is, in one sense, trivial; to say, using the German word, they are *geistig* is not to characterize them but to render the familiar names for them. One wants further to know in what sense they are *geistig*. Hegel's *Phenomenology* of 1807 is a classic attempt to answer this question. In neither of the senses (ii) and (iii), is it just false to say that Indian philosophy is spiritual. It is rather either unilluminating and trivial, or obfuscating and confusing, or it does not help to distinguish the Indian *darśanas* from a large segment of Western philosophy. *For me*, the most serious problem is that I do not understand what such a charaterization means.

The really interesting claims, then, are to be found in (iv) and (v). The *darśanas* are supposed to lead to the highest goal of life, the highest *puruṣārtha*, i.e. *mokṣa*, and this goal, if anything, deserves most eminently to be called 'spiritual'. As means to reach this goal, a *darśana*—or at least most of them—also deserves to be called 'spiritual'. I will not reiterate my continuing uneasiness with the term 'spiritual', but will rather concern myself with the substantive issue, if this means–end relationship of the *darśanas* to the highest goal of life should not be taken to throw light on the nature of Indian philosophy. Even on the most traditional account, the *darśanas* do not directly lead to *mokṣa*, at most they provide the needed intellectual defense of the *possibility* of *mokṣa*. Consider the account advanced by the Vedānta: the person desirous of *mokṣa* should, first, undertake *śravaṇa* i.e., studying the scriptures (and the relevant texts) under an appropriate teacher, then perform *manana* i.e., reflection on what has been learnt, and, finally, undertake *nididhyāsana* i.e., meditation on the truth learnt and reflectively appropriated. Now what is called philosophical thinking or doing the *darśanas*, belongs to the second stage i.e., *manana* which, on the traditional account, consists in (i) finding positive arguments in support of the position learnt, and (ii) finding arguments by which doubts about the impossibility of the position can be removed (*asambhāvanābuddhi nirākāraṇa*). The utmost that the Vedāntin as a philosopher can do is to interpret the texts, give arguments in one's support, and refute the arguments

advanced by the opponents against the position. The path from this point—provided there is an end point to this intellectual process—to achieving *mokṣa* is long, and leads beyond the scope of the *darśana*, in which case, even on the traditional account, the *darśana* is not the *karaṇa* of *mokṣa*. It is well known that it is not also a necessary antecedent—persons with no knowledge of the *darśana* may attain *mokṣa* by virtue of extraordinary gifts or inexplicable 'grace', or powerful 'traces' from past lives.

If the only function, then, which a *darśana* can perform in relation to *mokṣa* is to demonstrate the latter possibility—the alleged 'spirituality' of the *darśana* looses much of its point. For we can say rather that a *darśana* leads to *mokṣa,* not that a person truly understands a *darśana* when he attains *mokṣa*. The last, if asserted, would be unwarranted, and would lead to the consequence that all the great and traditionally respected philosophers belonging to a *darśana* (e.g. Vācaspati and Madhusūdana Saraswatī, in the case of Advaita Vedānta either did not truly understand the Advaita philosophy, or if they did they had attained *mokṣa*—the second alternative would prove itself to be either trivially true or simply unproven.)

Against a more sophisticated version of the view developed above about the relation of a philosophy to *mokṣa*—a version which Daya ascribes to the late K.C. Bhattacharyya and according to which philosophy leads to the theoretic awareness of certain valuational possibilities which are then actualized by some other extra-theoretic process such as *yoga*, in general by some form of *sādhanā*—Daya has certain very pertinent objections. ('Three conceptions of Indian philosophy', *Philosophy East and West*, 15, pp. 37–51). If this were the purpose of the *darśanas*, Daya argues, then Indian philosophy would have had a very short career indeed. For once the possibilities were demonstrated, that task would have needed no fresh attempt. This, I think, is a weak point: philosophical demonstration is not like mathematical proof (even mathematical proofs are revised, improved upon, sometimes entirely abandoned with the discovery of hitherto unnoticed assumptions.) A philosophical proof always leaves room for fresh arguments challenging it—thus there is a never-ending process of reflection. In fact, the point to be made against the Bhattacharyya-type model would rather be in regard to this unending nature of philosophical thinking: the putative demonstration would never come to an end. The stage of *manana* has to be arbitrarily

halted—as Kierkegaard knew very well—in order that the existential, actualizing *sādhanā* may begin. left to itself, *manana* would go on.

Daya has other arguments against any attempt to tie the ideal of *mokṣa* too closely to a philosophical system. There is no doubt in my mind that writers—not of philosophical works alone, but of quite other sorts of treatises—began by emphasizing their subservience to the ideal of *mokṣa*, which makes one wonder how seriously one needs to take such claims, whether this was not a matter of style—at most one of conforming to a recognized cultural norm. With regard to the *darśanas* one may want to take such claims more seriously: the issue is, how seriously? There is a well-known distinction between two sorts of philosophical works: the *ādhyātmika* ones and the *ānvīkṣikī* one. The former group—including Sāṁkhya, Yoga and Vedānta 'schools', and in my view, large chunks of Buddhism and Jainism—should be expected to have a closer connection with the goal of *mokṣa*; the latter group—the Nyāya and the Vaiśeṣika—may be expected not to have any such connection. Yet the distinctions are not thus clear cut. Every *ādhyātmika* system has its own logic and epistemology i.e., its own pramāṇa-theory; every *ānvīkṣikī* school lays claims to its own *ādhyātmika* goal. And yet the connections between these two 'discourses', despite claims to the contrary, are not clear and close, and one must recognize that Daya has again succeeded in putting his fingers on the right spot.

But instead of concluding that the claim as to conduciveness to *mokṣa* was a large and well-cultivated self-deception, let me try to think, if there is no other way of being fair to the tradition's self-understanding. For this purpose, I suggest that we bear two things in mind. First of all, every *darśana*, as a theoretical system, had a certain conception of *mokṣa* built into it, determined by and, in turn, determining certain broad metaphysical concepts. Therefore, the different systems were not different attempts to demonstrate the possibility of the same practical ideal of *mokṣa* but each was an attempt to demonstrate the possibility of its own ideal, of *mokṣa* as interpreted within its own system. And part of that demonstration was to show how its understanding of that goal was connected with the broad categorial structure of its own system. Secondly, to maintain that the *darśanas*—or all or at least many of them—undertook a certain task, or even defined themselves as intellectual enterprises in terms of a certain task, is by no means, to claim that

a *darśana*—or even any of the said *darśanas*—successfully carried out the project. This gap between the founding project and 'success' in executing that project haunts all philosophy and science—and provides the space where 'history' inserts itself. Each *darśana*, contrary (but not contradictory) to the tradition's self-understanding, has a historical development, the complicated character of which I cannot attend to at the moment. But this second point prepares us to respond to the argument—advanced by Daya, and by me as well in other places—that not all concerns of a *darśana* appear to have a conceivable relevance for the founding project of being instrumental to, or at least, exhibiting the possibility of, achieving *mokṣa*.

The worry that not all concerns of a *darśana* are equally relevant—or even have any relevance at all—for the founding project, is, one may suggest, due to the implicit assumption that a *darśana* is a perfectly close-knit system in which every component stands in organic relation to every other. There are students of Indian philosophy who hold such a view. Only on such a construal of a *darśana* will it be a decisive argument against the thesis that the system is either instrumental to, or a demonstration of the possibility of, *mokṣa* if only one can show that some very interesting and important concerns of the system do not appear to have any relevance for that project. If the system is an organic unity, then that thesis must be misleading, indeed false. But I am convinced that a *darśana* is not such a closely-knit, organic unity—as the historical development of a system shows. Many old doctrines are reinterpreted, modified, rejected and new ones added. With this conception of a *loose* system, many parts may be bereft of any relevance for the founding project, and yet the claim that such is the founding project may still be valid. It all depends upon what kind of determining role you assign to that project with regard to every nook and corner of a system.

Furthermore, consider the following comparison. Technology tries to deal with a specific task, a practical project, at hand. It falls back on applied physics, which is based on pure theoretical physics. Much of what the pure physicist does may be 'technologically' irrelevant, but a physical theory *as a whole* is not. Let us take another step in the direction of theorizing. A philosophy of science may seek to provide a logical foundation for a physical theory, as, for example, von Weizsäcker has done for quantum mechanics. But

such a logical, foundational theory itself has no direct, or even proximately indirect, relevance for the technology under consideration. Connections between parts of a theory, except in the case of a formal-deductive theory, guided by a fundamental project are never logically tight, and the connection between theory and practice is many-layered. In this ramified and loose set of interconnections, the sense of the practical project may, at times, be lost and may resurface at others.

What I have been trying to suggest, is that even if Daya's premises are correct, his conclusion does not inevitably follow. It may still be that the *darśanas*—and also the philosophers—accepted the founding project—sometimes explicitly if they were concerned with 'removal of pain' or implicitly in some other cases—possibly 'emptily', 'inauthentically' when they were doing logic and epistemology.

These remarks on the claim that the *darśanas* are 'spiritual' have, I believe, prepared the way for reflecting on Daya's other two 'myths' about Indian philosophy—namely those about 'schools' and 'texts'. With regard to both, Daya raises questions which are based on a largely correct evaluation of the facts concerned: the facts, namely, that the putative 'schools' encompass extreme divergences of views—this is particularly true of the Vedānta as a school, and that the so-called 'texts' are, as in the case of the *Vedas* and the *Upanisads*, results of compilations that are often arbitrary and editings that may look capricious. But the conclusions that Daya appears to draw are that there are in fact no 'schools' and no 'texts'. The premises warrant these conclusions only if it is assumed that talks about 'schools' and 'texts' are to be viable only if there are rigidly definable schools and non-arbitrarily circumscribed texts—authored preferably by one person—and not collected/compiled. Now it is this assumption that I find unacceptable.

To be fair to Daya, it must be emphasized that he drew attention to a serious drawback in our understanding of Indian philosophy. A well-known American philosopher—not lacking in either curiosity or respect for Indian philosophy—recounted to me with frustration, his experience with a philosopher from India who was invited to give a talk on Indian philosophy. The visitor began by saying 'There are six systems of orthodox Indian philosophy and three unorthodox systems.' The rest of the lecture was devoted to giving bird's eye-views of these nine systems. My friend added that this list was

certainly not what the department wanted to hear about. We need to notice, first, that this cliché, 'six systems' (*saddarśana*), does not and cannot claim antiquity. (Did it all begin with Max Müller?) Madhavācārya's *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* lists many more—including the Grammarians, the Pāśupatas and while the precise number, or even the inveterate habit of numbering, is not important, and in fact may conceal the real truths about the *darśanas*, there is no doubt that from very ancient times the locution of 'schools' did figure prominently in philosophical interchange. The best of the philosophers thought from within a 'school', and yet not even the most original amongst thinkers lays claim to have founded a new school. There is an obvious nobility about this last-mentioned fact, which contrasts so strikingly with the way some Western thinkers, far inferior in caliber, want to be known as founders of new schools of philosophy. (In the West, claims to originality become trite; in India, such claims are scarce. Regardless of geography, cases of true originality have to be sought after, and luckily and rewardingly, are often found.) This nobility however brings with it a certain blindness, in the culture, to the thoughts of an individual *qua* that individual, to the innovative and interpretive originalities of the thinker. However, even the tradition was not entirely blind to individual contributions. In some rare cases, the individual thinker proclaimed his defiance of the 'school's' tradition and insisted on his own innovations. Raghunātha Śiromaṇi is a striking example of this individualism. We only wish there were many more like him, so that the appearance of rigidity of the systems would have received the severe jolt that it needed. There are other cases where even the tradition recognized the originality of individual thinkers. The differences between Padmapāda and Vācaspati in interpreting Śaṁkara, Uddyotakara's numerous innovations in the Nyāya epistemology as also Digñāga's in the tradition to which he belonged, Gaṅgeśa's many new formulations of the Nyāya positions—all these are well known and well recognized. It is then the modern Indian writing in English, and not the Sanskrit Pandit, who is guilty of that intellectual fuzziness which is incurably expressed in the clichés about schools. Let us correct that fuzziness. But when all that is said and done, the fact remains, and we have to recognize this, contrary to Daya's conclusions that Indian philosophy throughout the ages, understood itself in that locution, and we must be able

to preserve that self-understanding. In order to be able to do that we need to define the 'schools' in terms of some of their basic concerns and some basic positions while leaving room for a whole range of possible variations and differences of opinions within that broad definition. Most of the schools are easy to take care of in this manner: no one could be a Vaiśeṣika unless one subscribed to atomism and a pluralistic ontology; no one could be a Naiyāyika unless one were a realist, a pluralist and also had an overriding concern with the *pramāṇa* theory. It is really with Vedānta that one meets with great difficulties: what could be the common conceptual framework between Advaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta? I believe, some common *questions* were being addressed: what is the *Brahman* (of the *Upaniṣads*) or the highest self (*paramātman*)? What is the relation between the finite individual self (*Jīva*) and this highest Self? Is the individuality of the finite self preserved in the state of *mokṣa*? None of the other 'schools'—the Sāṁkhya, the Yoga, the Nyāya, or the Vaiśeṣika asked these questions. Śaṁkara and Madhva—standing at two extremes of the spectrum—may be understood as giving quite different answers to these, and several other questions. A Vedāntin is anyone whose chief philosophical concern is with such questions.

The view that the texts, the three *prasthānas*, define Vedānta by providing the textual source of that philosophy, has been challenged by Daya. When did the *Bhagavadgītā* come to be accorded the status of a *prasthāna*? Not all of the *ācāryas* wrote commentaries on the *Gītā*. Not all the *Upaniṣads* enjoy the same 'authoritative' status, and all the *ācāryas* did not comment even upon all the major *Upaniṣads*. Again, here our criterion has to be loose and our critique cognizant of the unavoidably historical character of thought. Instead of going into the details, let me briefly indicate the interpretive moves that I will make in order to rehabilitate the tradition's self-understanding, even while conceding the facts Daya draws our attention to.

First of all, interpretive traditions and rhetorical styles of discourse spring up and are nurtured within a large tradition. Within the larger tradition opened up by the *Upaniṣads*—themselves compilations of texts from the Vedic corpus—the *Brahmasūtras* achieved a certain formalization of ideas and thesis and issues. But it is only the *Bhāṣyakāras* who, within the already opened up horizon, established

'schools', although they reserved the school's name for that larger horizon within which they were thinking. The *ṭīkākāras* and all the rest of the epigones worked out what must have been the intention of the original horizon only by way of trying to interpret the *Bhāṣya*. Why did Madhusūdana not comment on the *Brahmasūtras*, and why did Vācaspati not comment on the *Nyāyasūtras*? The reason is clear. You cannot overlook the history of interpretation that has already defined a (sub=) tradition, you cannot jump across time and history and directly enter into the intentions behind the *sūtras*. You can only do so, standing at this point of time and this historical situation, through the interpretive legacy that separates you from the source. For a theoretical defense of this theory of interpretation (as contra-distinguished from that 'romantic' stance according to which the interpreter must bypass history and tradition and seek to enter directly into the author's mind and intentions), see Hans Georg Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode* (Truth and Method).

You not only think and interpret from within a tradition—and not in an empty logical space—but as you carry the interpretive history forward, the tradition also undergoes changes while the interpretive intention wants to hold on to and preserve a sense of identity in and through these changes. Tradition is not a cluster of *facts* about texts and documents, but a horizon of interpretive possibilities opened up and instituted by the founding texts; but as the interpretive possibilities are actualized, new possibilities open up—possibilities that were not 'contained in' the original disclosure, but which are 'interpreted' to be carrying on 'anticipations' and 'pre-delineations' indicated in the texts. Whether this *in fact* was so is a pointless question, for again we are trying to articulate how a tradition, in course of its history, *perceives itself*.

Such a developmental–interpretive conception of a tradition can, I believe, restore the validity of the locution of 'schools' in the face of many of Daya's critiques.

I will not now take up the questions about *śabdapramāṇa* and about the so-called (for this is only the modern English writer's misleading mode of speaking) 'authority' of the *Vedas*. I have developed my positive views about these—after years of sceptical and negative stance—in my Presidential Address to the Indian Philosophical Congress, in 1986 (which appears in this collection). For the purpose of the present discussion, let me say this much: in the first

place, it is important to bear in mind that the thesis to be examined is the thesis of *śabdapramāṇa*. The talk about the authority of the *Vedas* is a red herring; it generates a false impression about what goes on within the *darśanas* and so is a rather weak thesis to combat. The theses that are debated within the *darśanas* are: (i) that *śabda* is a *pramāṇa* that is irreducible to either perception or inference or any other; (ii) that in the hierarchy of *pramāṇas*—arranged in order of relative strength—the *prāmāṇya* of *śruti* stands highest, and so cannot be superseded by any other; (iii) that the *prāmāṇya* of *śabda*, as well as of any other cognition, is intrinsic (*svataḥ*) to that cognition; (iv) that *śruti* derives its strength and preeminence from the fact that it is *apauruṣeya*, i.e., not composed by any human author.

It must be remembered while passing judgement on the tradition's understanding of itself, that even in the case of the *āstika* (misleadingly rendered 'orthodox') *darśanas*, all these theses with the sole exception of (ii), were *debated*, i.e., were open to discussion. Only the thesis that the *prāmāṇya* of *śruti* was the 'strongest' was not questioned. So I will briefly state how I propose to understand this thesis.

If the 'strength' of the *prāmāṇya* of *śruti* was never to be called into question, there was considerable difference of opinion as to what the texts *meant*. Considering the fact that philosophies as diverse from each other as is conceivable accepted the thesis (ii), one cannot but have reasonable worry about the usefulness of that thesis. What I want to suggest is that *śruti* itself is not a *prāmāṇa*, it does not give us a set of truths, true propositions, to be accepted. You cannot isolate any such truth that all the *āstika darśanas* accepted—excepting the belief that the self, *ātmā*, is different from the body and beliefs about rebirth, *karma* and possibility of *mokṣa*. But, as is well known, there was so much of divergence of opinion regarding each of these concepts that it would be rather *misleading* if not false to say that they all shared a set of common beliefs. The overriding importance, the supreme preeminence of the *śruti*, lies not in the fact that they are sources of our knowledge of truths that cannot be denied, but in the fact that they, for the first time, defined for us the parameters—i.e. the fundamental concerns, questions and basic vocabulary—within which we, as well as our ancestors, have been thinking. The *śruti* opened up the horizon—an open horizon, to be sure—within which we have learnt to think, interpret (both ourselves and our world) and question. The primacy of *śruti*, then,

lies not in its being the 'strongest' *prāmāṇa*, but in being the historical foundation of our modes of thinking.

And yet we do not have an unmediated access to this foundation. Our access is through 'interpretation', and that again presupposes the history of interpretations which mediates between us and the texts. It is not important *who* wrote them; no less misleading is the enquiry, what did the authors intend to mean? The interpretive project has nothing to gain from these two queries: the first may lead to discoveries of fact but will not add to our understanding of the texts; the second is pointless, being, in principle, unanswerable. The texts, the words themselves, are foundational. We shall go on interpreting the texts, not their authors. It is this infinite *plasticity of meaning* of the texts, which does not allow us to say with finality what is *the* meaning e.g. of a *mahāvākya*, but always leaves room for new possibilities of interpretation which, as far as I can see, best captures and retrieves the sense of the talk of the *apauruṣeyatva* of the *śruti*.

6
Consciousness in Vedānta

I

Contrary to Heidegger's famed historiography of philosophy, a metaphysics of consciousness has been the destiny of Indian thought.

There are three fundamental *issues* around which Indian thinking on the nature of consciousness evolved. These are: does consciousness necessarily manifest itself as it manifests its object, or not? In disputational terms, is it *sva-prakāśa* or *para-prakāśa*? Secondly, is consciousness, by its essential nature, of an object or not? This is the familiar issue, in contemporary Western thought, about the intentionality of consciousness: in disputational terms, is it *saviṣayaka* or *nirviṣayaka*? Thirdly, does consciousness have a form, structure or content of its own, or not: is it *sākāra* or *nirākāra*? While these issues were discussed by all schools of philosophy, the Vedantins, under the influence of the great Śaṁkara, introduced a new issue: does consciousness belong to someone, does it have a place, 'topos', *āśraya*, or is it 'place-less', *nirāśraya*, belonging to no one?

II

The radicalness of Śaṁkara's Vedānta consists in the extreme position Śaṁkara took up and he and his followers defended with great dialectical and exegetical acumen. On this radically extreme view, consciousness is essentially only self-manifesting, *svaprakāśa*, but not of-an-object, not having-a-form-of-its own, and does not have a 'resting place'. Using the Sanskrit terminology, consciousness is *nirviṣaya, nirākāra* and *nirāśraya*. In other words, the thesis amounts to this. Ordinarily, the only consciousness I know of is mine (directly), and of others like me (indirectly), in any case, the consciousness I

know of are of this or that object. Śaṁkara's thesis is that the above is true of conscious *states*, but not of consciousness as such. So it has to have a theory of how conscious *states* are related to what is called consciousness *as such*. (For the present, let me leave the other two components of Śaṁkara's thesis out of consideration, to return to them at a later stage). And this theory has to show why even if consciousness *as such* is object-less and ego-less, a conscious *state* appears to be both intentional and egological.

Now there are two ways of conceiving of this relation, which are not of much help to us. One may want to construe the relation as that between a universal and its instantiations, such as that between redness and the many patches of red. Now lots of things which may meaningfully be said of these patches cannot obviously be said of redness (e.g. we cannot say, 'Redness is one square inch in dimension.') Nevertheless, there are at least three problems to reckon with: in the first place, one never says red*ness* is one square inch in dimension, although one does say 'my consciousness' or 'yours'. Secondly, a universal is an abstract entity which cannot be by itself, but needs other features to be realized (in the case of redness, such additional things as a hue, some order of brightness, illumination and some spatial extension). But consciousness as such is, in Śaṁkara's theory, not only about *the* concretely existent, the only thing which has an independent existence (a statement which needs some obvious qualifiers, but that does not affect the present argument). Thirdly, our concept of redness or of the universal 'man' is derived from the particular instantiations by separating out what is variable and contingent. This does not entitle us to have the universal 'consciousness' exclude all intentionality and all reference to the ego. At most we are entitled to say that while particular conscious states have specific objects and specific egos, consciousness as such must contain an indefinite intentionality to something or other, and an indefinite reference to some ego or other. A greater abstraction than this is not warranted, unless it is on some other grounds.

The second way of construing the relation between consciousness as such and the conscious states is to make use of a distinction, available in Western thought, between *Bewusstsein überhaupt* and the empirical apperception construed *à la* Kant as the temporal succession of inner representations. Leaving aside the question if

Bewusstsein überhaupt is not individuated, there are at least two features or functions assigned to it, which cannot be assigned to consciousness as such in Śaṁkara's Vedānta. One of these is that *Bewusstsein überhaupt* still has, as its intentional correlate, the object-in-general, what Kant calls the transcendental object (not to be confused with his *Dingansich*); the other is that *Bewusstsein überhaupt* does something namely, to bring the inner representations, through categorial syntheses, under the concept of an object in general. None of these—neither the reference to an object in general, nor the synthetic function—can be ascribed to consciousness in Śaṁkara's Vedānta.

Let me pursue the problem at hand a little further. One may want to say that the relation between consciousness as such and the mental states is rather that of *awareness* and that of which one is aware. To see the point of this latter distinction one needs to stipulate that awareness directly relates not to objects of our mental states (such as sticks or stones or numbers), but only to those mental states themselves, and only indirectly to the latter's objects. In that case, we should *not* say that I am aware of you all before me; I am aware rather of seeing you, of talking to you, and you all become indirect objects of awareness insofar as you are objects of my mental states which themselves are directly objects of my awareness. I think this is the well-known thesis of the Vivaraṇa that the mental state (i.e. the *antaḥkaraṇavṛtti*) is *kevala-sākṣi-vedya*, and everything, whether as known or as unknown (*jñātatayā ajñātatayā vā*) is an object of the *sākṣi*-consciousness.

But, again, note that this awareness has two sorts of objects: a direct object (i.e. the mental state) and an indirect object (i.e. the object of that mental state). What then is the justification for hypostatising it as a purely objectless consciousness? As it functions in experience, this witness consciousness, as it is called, is intentional. What evidence *or* arguments have we, to support the thesis that it, or in fact any other modality of consciousness is thoroughly non-intentional?

Before turning to this last-mentioned issue, I will mention another way of formulating the relation between consciousness as such and the conscious states. This formulation is fairly widespread in the literature, but not for that reason philosophically satisfactory. It consists in saying that consciousness *as such* is the *reality*, the many

mental states are mere *appearances* of that reality—in the same manner as the many moons-reflections (in different puddles of water, rivers or lakes) are appearance of the one moon; or different spaces (limited by different limitors such as four walls of a room, or a window frame) are appearances of one space; or the color red appears to characterize a clear crystal which unbeknownst to us, is in close proximity to a red flower. If you insist that none of these metaphors is appropriate, you will be told that it is wrong to take a metaphor in all its aspects, that a metaphor is intended to illuminate only in one of its aspects. But then a metaphor helps us to understand, only if the thesis is already taken to be true; a metaphor cannot do the job of an argument or of an evidence—supplying experience.

III

What I want to insist upon is that pure consciousness, in its minimal signification of being non-intentional is *not* a phenomenological datum of non-mystical experience. Is it something towards which logical and metaphysical reasonings lead us? Starting with ordinary intentional consciousness, one may want to show that intentional consciousness presupposes the non-intentional, or one may argue that consciousness, by its nature, *cannot* be—on logical grounds—intentional. Or, there is still the path open to try to show that even within the limits of ordinary experience one has access, however fleeting, to a mode of consciousness that is non-intentional. All these three paths have been followed by those Indian philosophers who believe that consciousness, at a certain level, is, in fact, non-intentional. Philosophers belonging to Śaṁkara's school of Advaita Vedānta have tried all these three: they have argued that a non-intentional consciousness is what makes ordinary experience possible, that consciousness cannot admit of any difference (*bheda*) within it (for all such difference must be its object), so that the subject–object difference must be extrinsic to it, i.e. must belong to the world and not to consciousness, and finally that an undifferentiated *awareness* does in fact always accompany all waking life and even persists through dreamless sleep. The first, if valid, would be a transcendental thesis ('transcendental' in the Kantian sense); the second, is metaphysical and the third, phenomenological. The logical reasoning which is brought in support by the second sort of move

may be intended to show either that all difference is metaphysically unreal (somewhat in the manner of F.H. Bradley's attack on relations) or that all difference must characterize, or belong, to things in the world but not to consciousness. The former proves too much, and even in proving what it is meant for presupposes a criterion of reality; the latter falls short of proving that consciousness is not consciousness of an object, for it does show that relations and differences are objects of consciousness. The transcendental and the phenomenological theses shall be of great interest to us.

What is the transcendental argument in this context? It must show that ordinary, intentional consciousness presupposes *pure* consciousness. But how would the argument run? It is one thing to say that all experience presupposes consciousness, but this does not entail that the consciousness that is presupposed must be pure. To argue that experience is intentional and what it presupposes must be non-intentional is, in fact, begging the issue. One may want to argue that the essence of consciousness is to be self-illuminating (*svayaṃprakāśa*) and that it is only an accident, that it also 'manifests' an object other than itself. But this is unconvincing, and in fact covertly begs the issue. For how does one fix the *essence* of consciousness save by way of ascertaining what it is, in fact or can be, in principle. To rule out a feature by definition would be a sheer decision by fiat, one could as well decide to *define* consciousness by intentionality and rule out 'purity' and 'self-illumination.' Why can consciousness not, in fact, be, *by its essence, both* self-illuminating and intentional? I am not saying that it is, for I do not want to bring in the notion of essence or to rule out a possibility of definition. Only, I do not recognize any inconsistency in its being both. I have been left unconvinced by Śaṁkara's point in the opening sentence of his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* that consciousness and object, '*asmadpratyaya*' and '*yuṣmadpratyaya*', self and not-self are opposed to each other like light and darkness. What is this alleged opposition like? Consciousness is self-illuminating, object is not. But why should this contrast, fundamental though it may be, render the fact of intentionality (*saviṣayakatva*) unintelligible? As one commentator on Śaṁkara recognizes, the opposition is not to be understood as that between the destroyer and the destroyed (*bādhya-bādhaka-bhāva*). Consciousness does not annul objects, but rather manifests them. Nor is the opposition to be understood in the sense

that the two cannot co-exist (*sahāvasthānasāmarthyābhāva*). In fact, light and darkness do co-exist in a dimly lit place, consciousness and object do co-exist in the web of ordinary experience. The opposition, then, amounts only to this: they have such radically different properties that they cannot be confused with one another. This much of opposition is consistent with *the fact* of intentional reference. Śaṁkara's conclusion that intentionality must therefore be metaphysically false, is hardly warranted by the mere fact that consciousness and object have very different features. In the simple fact of consciousness' being of an object, one need not apprehend the possibility of ascribing to one the properties of the other. It is true that you may have a naturalistic interpretation of intentionality which tends to misconstrue consciousness as an object: likewise with an idealistic misconstrual as well.

Rāmānuja impresses me by his clear perception that consciousness is both self-illuminating and intentional. I think, however, that he ties these two features too closely: *only when* consciousness is intentional, he seems to be saying, does it reveal itself. This, to my mind, is unnecessarily strict, and would rule out the very possibility of pure consciousness, which I do not want to rule out *by definition*.

The phenomenological approach to show the possibility of pure consciousness can start only with ordinary experience, the sort of experience to which most of us have access. There is one specially attractive way of doing this. One may distinguish, within any particular state of consciousness, between the aspect of awareness (which must be, like a universal feature, present in all states of consciousness) and the aspect of intentionality (which varies from state to state, depending upon the object, the knowing person, time, and the mode of intention). The latter, by itself, is not a state of consciousness, in order to be so it needs to be accompanied by awareness. Once this distinction is conceptually made, two possible theses seem to follow. On the one hand, it is now plausible to say what a mental state can be, without being accompanied by awareness: this, indeed, is in consonance with the dominant interpretation of modern psychoanalysis. By the same token, one may want to assert that the simple awareness can be equally well dissociated from any particular mental state it may happen, contingently, to accompany. This argument, which at one stroke seems to be able to reconcile the psychoanalytic theory of the unconscious and the Yoga belief

in the possibility of cultivating the attitude of *mere* awareness (of which, to be sure, there are several different possible variations, *conceptually* conceivable) is impressive, but its very simplicity makes it suspect. Granting the *distinction* between the two aspects, the universal 'awareness' and the particular mental state, the possibility of a *separation* does not immediately follow, nor does it follow that the two aspects cannot be separated. Awareness, on this account, is like any universal feature shared in common by members of a class, but from this fact the thesis of universals *ante re* does not logically follow (nor does the Freudean thesis of 'unconscious' mental states). But both options are open and that is the best we can expect under the circumstances.

Pure awareness, then, in the sense of a universal detachable from the particular mental states with which it is associated, is at best a goal whose possibility philosophy can keep open. From a practical standpoint, one *has to show* that attainment of such separation is *a demand* that is implicit within the range of ordinary experience and also *an axiological demand*, i.e. it *ought* to be realized.

IV

What I have done so far may be stated here. I have *not* maintained that a non-intentional consciousness is impossible. How could any one maintain such a thesis? Only if I start with a definition of consciousness as intentional, could I rule out, on logical grounds, the possibility of non-intentional consciousness. That path I did not want to follow, lest that might suggest an arbitrary act of ruling out a possibility. One could as well take the opposite path—if the essence of consciousness is to be self-manifesting, how could it be intentional? My difficulty has been: within the bounds of my experience I have found no foothold from where I could conceptualize the alleged pure non-intentional consciousness. Its logical possibility still remains open.

I have also suggested that the idea of a pure non-intentional consciousness may best be regarded as a goal to be attained, rather than as an ontological reality. Let me now pursue this line of thinking a few steps. How is this new construal to be understood? There is a certain conception of *freedom from* underlying this understanding, which is best formulated in the contemporary Indian Vedāntin, the

late K.C. Bhattacharyya's brilliant little book, *The Subject as Freedom.* The idea that K.C. Bhattacharyya so painstakingly develops may be formulated thus: the subject–object relation is best understood as a one-sided relatedness. From the side of the object, the relatedness of the subject is essential; from the side of the subject, the relatedness of the object is only a *free* and seeming relation, which is also a 'distancing from' (recall Buber's talk of *Urdistanz* and *Beziehung*). This asymmetry is due to the fact that our common concepts of relation are objective. Our familiar relations are amongst objects. Here we have two totally heterogeneous terms—a subject and an object—entering into a relation: the subject, out of freedom which it can claim by withdrawing from this or that external object, by retreating into the interiority of one's mental life, into affective and volitional experiences, which shape rather than are shaped by, objects of the world. This *Urdistanz* characterizes, even if incipiently, our most receptive and passive experience such as sense perception, *demands* explicit realization in a spiritual experience which would set the subjective life of consciousness *free from* all object, and for which all objectivation is a 'free production' of (apparent) 'forms'.

This I think is the best way of making sense of the Advaita thesis. But, again, let us reflect on it. There is something important in the thesis that the relation between subject and object is unlike those relations that obtain amongst objects. Even Brentano knew this. He said that intentionality is rather relation-like. Recent researches on the logic of intentional verbs have brought out interesting aspects of it. Intentionality obtains even if the object does not exist, as when I am thinking of what might have been the case. The intentional structure is preserved, even if we bracket out the positing of existence of the object. For the object, however—it does make sense to say—to be what it is needs to be the object of some appropriate intentional act. Given this undoubted asymmetry, one can make any of the several possible moves:

One may set up before oneself—as a philosopher, but primarily as one who wants to change his life—the goal of taking up the suggestion incipient in this asymmetry, and cultivate that freedom of the subject from its object-directedness. This has to be an *asymptotic* process: the idea of pure non-intentional consciousness is the reified, ontologized equivalent of that normative goal.

Or, one may seek to achieve freedom by overcoming the *naïveté* of all ontologies, and making explicit to reflective thinking, how any world after all is constituted by the meaning-giving functions of consciousness. This is the path of transcendental phenomenology.

What about the so-called mystical experience on which writers on Vedānta (but, to be sure, not they alone) tend to fall back. It is not my intention to deny the reality of mystical experience or of any experience. What I want to insist upon, however, is this: *to have an experience and to draw metaphysical lessons from it are two different things. No bare experience tells its own tale.* The experience concerned has to play a certain role of fulfilling a prior conceptual intention, in order to be of cognitive value. This is why mystical experiences are made to support quite different theories. They are to a large extent theory-neutral.

V

I had stated at the beginning of this paper four disputational issues in Indian thinking about consciousness. Of these four, only one has engaged my attention uptil now. To comment on the other three would take me beyond the limits of time at my disposal. But I will briefly touch upon two of them in order to complete the story in its bare outlines.

Is consciousness self-manifesting (*sva-prakāśa*) or not (*para-prakāśa*)? The Advaita chooses the first alternative, at the other extreme the Nyāya chooses the second. There are no doubt many intermediate possibilities. Against the Nyāya view to the effect that a state of consciousness is apprehended only by another, reflective act, one raises the familiar spectre of an infinite regress. This however is misleading, the regress is not unavoidable, for whether at any point there would be a next reflective act depends upon my desire to perform one. While this stops the regress, it does open up another charge against which the Nyāya is, as far as I can see, helpless. To be able to desire to reflect upon the just gone state of consciousness, one needs to have some acquaintance with the latter. You cannot desire to know what you simply have no acquaintance with. It is this pre-reflective acquaintance with my conscious life at every moment of its being—what Sartre called pre-reflective, non-positional translucency—which is its *svayaṁprakāśatva*. Here I side with Vedānta, Mīmāṁsā and the Buddhist.

Is consciousness content-or-form-less (*nirākāra*) or does it have a content or form of its own (*sākāra*)? Here the Hindu philosophers generally agreed amongst themselves that consciousness, to use the words of Udayana, is form-less and owes its seeming form to the form of whatever happens to be its object—a position which was challenged by the Buddhist. The issue, which is deep and yet which is often obscured by the metaphors and jargons in the literature, is best formulated in the form which Digñāga gave it. Is consciousness of blue really consciousness-of-blue, is—in other words—being blue an internal content of that conscious state, or does it fall totally outside of it, out in the world as Sartre would say? How could a conscious state itself be blue, one may ask Digñāga? But—the Buddhist may rightly retort, that is not what he is saying. It is not blue, but being-of-blue that internally characterizes the state of consciousness under consideration. Blue is a feature of that wall, but being-of-blue of an awareness. If there is no such internal content characterizing a state of consciousness, if *internally* consciousness of blue and consciousness of yellow are exactly alike (their difference being differences in their objects which are out in the world), then—the Buddhist would ask the Hindu realist—why is it that any state of consciousness does not refer to any object, why is it that there is a determinate one-one relation between a conscious state and its object? The issues at stake were far deeper than what I am talking about. The realism of the Hindus as much as the idealism of the Yogācāras depended partly on how one chose to take sides on this matter. I can briefly say only this much. A theory that consciousness has its own form, i.e. is *sākāra* combined with a theory that it is also self-manifesting leads to Yogācāra idealism. On the other hand, the best defense of realism lies in a theory that consciousness is formless, i.e., *nirākāra* combined with a theory that it is also not self-manifesting—it is precisely this combination that the Nyāya holds. I opt for a *sākāra* theory in the sense that a state of consciousness has an internal *structure*—not a content, but a logical structure which on my view is disclosed not in the pre-reflective transparency but only in reflective analysis—hence a certain modified realism is provided for.

The Advaita of Śaṁkara—to return to that theme now—held an intermediate position. Of course, the pure non-intentional consciousness is formless: being non-intentional, being-of-blue could not be *its internal* characteristic even when I have a consciousness of blue.

However, the Advaita did recognize that in sensing a blue one's mental state does indeed undergo a certain modification, a certain objective formation adapting itself to the form of whatever happens to be its object. Thus something other than consciousness undergoes this formation—*manas* or mind, otherwise called the internal sense, *antaḥkaraṇa* which is wrongly attributed to the neverchanging consciousness. This new distinction between consciousness and mental states has been examined and found unsatisfactory.

The position I have defended by way of criticizing Śaṁkara's Advaita, still belongs peripherally to Vedānta: its elements have been drawn from Rāmānuja and from Śaiva-siddhānta, from Nyāya and from Yogācāra. For an admirer of Indian thought, this need not produce consternation. Indian thought always had thinkers like Vāçaspati and Vijñānabhikṣu (and Raghunātha Śiromaṇi), who were called *Sarvatantrasvatantra*—independent of all schools.

VI

To conclude, I will briefly ask two questions. Why should one make the Advaita move to a pure, non-intentional, non-egological, contentless, objectless consciousness? What sort of *philosophical understanding* of the world does it yield? To the first, I have given the only answer that for me makes sense. It lies in pursuing a normative goal of freedom misleadingly construed as a freedom *from*. To throw some light on the second question, I will briefly compare with it two such concepts: the God of theism and the Absolute Spirit of Hegel. All three are meant to explain the world, but in different ways. The God of a developed theistic religion is understood as the creator of the world, so that all items of the world down to the minutest details are due to Him. But they are His *real* creations, they cannot be *logically* deduced from His nature, for in His infinite creativity, He is still free. The Hegelian spirit is the immanent *reason* behind nature and history, and so explains the logical structure of all reality—but not sundry sticks and stones whose reality from the point of view of the Spirit stands transformed and transmuted. The pure consciousness of Advaita is the underlying reality of which the world is an appearance. Appearance presupposes reality, but reality need not have to appear. The world needs Brahman for its possibility, but Brahman is not an explanation

of the way the world is. The very being of the world as an appearance is irrational, inscrutable; the details of this world are capable only of empirical (e.g. scientific) explanations, but the Brahman is no substitute for those explanations. It explains, in a very peculiar sense, as the *necessary, but not sufficient,* condition of the *possibility* of the world.* It does not explain the world's *actuality*. It does not explain *why* the world is there, the reason behind it, for to say that the world is a false appearance is to say there is no reason behind it. Its explanatory power is *minimal* compared to the other two concepts. Its strength lies in keeping open the possibility of competing *empirical* explanations of the world process to pursue their projects. Compatibility with science is its strength, but that precisely is its weakness as well; it is conceding that from the standpoint of Brahman there is no world, nothing that needs to be explained.

* In this sense Brahman is the modal possibility of the world-editor.

7

Can the Self become an Object?

(Thoughts on *Śaṁkara's* statement: *nāyam ātmā ekāntena aviṣaya*)

In his Introduction to his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*, known as *adhyāsabhāṣyam*, Śaṁkara, after giving his celebrated definition of *'adhyāsa'*, raises the following *pūrvapakṣa: 'Katham punah pratyagātmani aviṣaye adhyāso viṣayataddharmāṇām?'* How can there be superimposition of objects and their properties upon the self which is not an object? For, in all cases of superimposition an object (*viṣaya*) is superimposed upon another that lies in front (*'purovasthite viṣaye viṣayāntaramadhyasati'*). Self, *ātmā*, however, according to Śaṁkara, is not an object, it is *aviṣaya*. How then is the superimposition of not-self upon self at all possible?

Śaṁkara replies to this objection in two parts. First, he says, the self is not entirely *a-viṣaya*. Secondly, he questions the validity of the rule that superimposition is always of an object upon another that is being perceived (*purovasthite*). In my remarks here, I will be concerned only with the first part of Śaṁkara's reply, and not at all with the second part.

The initial response is formulated in a most enigmatic sentence: '*na tāvadayam ekāntena aviṣayaḥ*'. This self, Śaṁkara means, is not entirely non-object. To anyone who is familiar with Śaṁkara's philosophy, nothing could be more enigmatic. Ever since I read this text some forty-five years ago, I have not ceased to wonder about it. In this essay, I will look at how commentators have sought to resolve the enigma, and then I will suggest a way out, that is more radical and more consistent than the ones reviewed.

Let us, however, recall the text in its entirety. After saying that the self is not entirely non-object, Śaṁkara proceeds to give two reasons for saying so: first, *asmatpratyayaviṣyatvāt* (because the self is the object of the sense of 'I'); secondly, *aparokṣatvāt* (because it is known immediately).

If these were good reasons why the self is also an object, then the *pūrvapakṣa* objection has been answered. There would be no reason why Śaṁkara would proceed to question, as he does, the rule that the locus of superimposition must be a presented object. The fact that he does question that rule (by pointing out that children ascribe darkness to the sky although the sky is not a perceptible object, so why not the same in the case of the self) suggests that he was not quite at ease either with that enigmatic statement or with the reasons given in its support. I suspect the latter is the case.

Before I proceed to say why I think so, there is one curious feature in the chain of Śaṁkara's argument, that should be noted. The objection to which he is replying insists that the self is not an object and so cannot be the locus of superimposition. Śaṁkara's reply is first that the self is also an object, but next is that the locus need not be a presented object. The *ākāśa* is a *viṣaya*, but not a perceived *viṣaya*. What is then required for something to be the locus of superimposition: is it enough for it to be an object, or is it necessary that it be a perceived or presented object? The second alternative is denied (on the basis of the example of *ākāśa*). So all that is needed is that it be an object—which *ātmā*, Śaṁkara tells us, is. It is at least not the case that it is, in all respects, not one. But how can Śaṁkara consistently say so, when he, times without number, in all his writings, describes the *ātmā* as *a-viṣaya*? Several answers to this question are to be found amongst the commentators.

Padmapāda, the Master's most famous direct disciple, says that the self is the object of the discourses of the scriptures, of *śrutivākyāṇi*. But in this sense anything and everything can be talked about and can be the object of linguistic discourse. But do not the scriptures refer to the self as that 'from which words dissociate themselves' ('*yato vācā nivartante*') as *avācya*? In his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.4, Śaṁkara writes: the scriptures do not want to talk about *brahman* as objectified by 'this'. Rather they want to discourse about the self as a non-object. ('*na hi śāstraṃ idantayā viṣayabhūtaṃ brahma pratipipādayiṣati......pratyagātmatvena aviṣayatayā pratipādayat avidyākalpitaṃ vedyaveditṛvedanādibhedaṃ apanayati.*')

However, is not characterizing the self as *avācya* also saying something about it (as Bhartṛhari insists), and so making it an object? If this is the sense in which the self is an object, does this help us to answer the main objection? Obviously not, for, as Śaṁkara says

in the same text, all *pramāṇas* including the *Vedas* are tainted with *avidyā*, so that the scripture's talking about the self is a result of *avidyā* and involves superimposition i.e. transferring to the self some features of the not-self and what the *pūrvapakṣa* was questioning is the very possibility of such transference if the self is not an object at all. As a consequence, to use the fact that the self is an object of scriptural discourse to account for the possibility of superimposition is, in fact, a circular argument—that objectivity of the self itself being a case of superimposition.

The same sort of circularity vitiates Padmapāda's gloss on the Master: the self is not a non-object *in toto, asmatpratyayviṣayatvāt*, because of its being the object of the 'I'-sense. This however would not do, for in the very opening sentence of the text Śaṁkara takes 'being known by the sense of "I"' (*asmatpratyayagocaratva*) as pertaining to the *viṣayi*, the subject, which is opposed to the *viṣaya*, the object. We cannot therefore interpret Śaṁkara's statement a few sentences later, that the self is sometimes an object, as referring to this fact that it is apprehended by the 'I'-sense. Strictly speaking, the 'I' does not objectify the self, it rather, in a peculiar way, points to the self as the speaker's self without making the latter its object-about-which.

Vācaspati, in his *Bhāmatī*, comments on the same text thus (I cannot resist the temptation of quoting his marvellous sentence, which, as tradition characterizes it, is both *prasanna* and *gambhira*):

> satyam pratyagātmā svayamprakāśatvādaviṣayo'naṃśasāca.tathāpi anirvacaniyānādi-*avidyā*-parikalpita-buddhimanah-sūkśmasthūlaśarīren-driyāvaccedena anavaccinno'pi vastuto'vacchinna iva, abhinno'pi bhinna iva,...aviṣayo'pi asmatpratyaviṣaya iva... avabhāsate.

The self, owing to *avidyā*, although in itself non-object appears as object i.e. as the object of the 'I'-sense. Vācaspati in effect follows the same line as the author of *Pañcapādikā*. To the objection of circularity I have raised, Vācaspati replies, there is no such circularity because of the beginninglessness of the series of earlier superimpositions producing the succeeding ones.

We have not found a satisfactory answer. We still want to have a non-circular account of how the self could become an object without using the notion of 'false superimposition'. None of the other commentators add any new mode of understanding.

The later writers on Advaita Vedānta have devoted a lot of analytical thinking to the concept of '*viṣayatva*', to the question, namely, what is it that constitutes being-an-object. Here I will be drawing upon Citsukha's *Tattvapradīpikā* and Madhusūdana Saraswatī's *Advaitasiddhi*. We have the following concepts of '*viṣayatva*':

1. If a thing appears in a cognition, then that thing is the *viṣaya* or object of that cognition. This definition taken from Śālikanātha's *Prakaraṇapañcikā* is implicitly circular. Such things as jars cannot be in a cognition. They can be in it only as its object—hence the circularity. (Note that it is in this sense that Śaṁkara's statement is interpreted by many authors. Thus *Ratnaprabhā*: self is an object because it appears (*bhāsamana*) in '*ahamiti*'. This of course leads to the circularity pointed out earlier and the appeal to beginninglessness to avoid the circularity.)
2. The object of a cognition is that which confers on that cognition its form or *ākāra*. This definition, supposedly the Buddhists', won't do, for knowledge of things past, and God's knowledge (of all things) are not caused by whatever happens to be their accusatives.
3. An object of a cognition may be defined as that which is the locus of an effect brought about by that cognition. What could be this effect but knownness or *jñātatā* produced by the cognition? This Bhātta view stands or falls with the concept of *jñātatā* whose defects are well known.
4. To be an object means to be capable (*yogya*) of linguistic usage (*vyavahāra*): this definition requires that we can know this *yogyatā* or fitness whose being-an-object, then, would require further *yogyatā*—thereby leading to a *regressus ad infinitum*.

Note that in none of the senses 1–4, can the self be an object. Only if 4 is modified, i.e. if instead of saying whatever is capable of linguistic usage we say whatever, without being knowable (*avedyatve sati*) is capable of linguistic usage, then what we get is a classic definition of 'self-revealingness' (*svaprakāśatva*), which applies to the self. Some commentators, therefore, take Śaṁkara's statement that the self is sometimes an object to mean that the self is the object of *aparokṣa*, immediate knowledge. ('*svaprakāśatvena bhāsamānatvāt ātmane' dhyāsādisthānatvam sambhavatīti.' Ratnaprabhā*)[1]

But this may mean either that the self is self-manifesting, *svayamprakāśa*, or that the self is the object of an immediate knowledge brought about by the Vedānta sentences (*śabdajanya aprokṣajñāna*). But none of these will do. The self-manifestingness of the self is

precisely defined as implying its *avedyatva*, its not being an object of cognition. What then about the second alternative?

Although it is the standard doctrine of Advaita Vedānta theory and practice that the self is known by an immediate knowledge that is brought about by the Vedānta sentences, and so it may appear as if the self is indeed an object of such knowledge, the matter is somewhat different. What the immediate awareness resulting from (hearing, reflection and contemplation of) the Vedānta sentences does is to destroy the ignorance which conceals the self. With the destruction of the ignorance, the self which is self-manifesting shows itself without being an object.

It would then seem that the self is originally an object of this ignorance or *avidyā*. *Adhyāsa* is not the only function of ignorance. *Adhyāsa*, construed as superimposition, presupposes that ignorance has already concealed the self. Concealing the self is to objectify it. Is it this primal objectification that is a condition of the possibility of *adhyāsa*? That the self is the object (*viṣaya*) of *avidyā*—as well as being its locus (*āśraya*)—is a well-known doctrine of the vivaraṇa school. Śaṁkara's statement that the self is not entirely non-object agrees with this thesis, and since it is *adhyāsa* and not concealment (*āvaraṇa*) which requires an object as its locus, we seem to be immune to the charge of circularity and can avoid appealing to the idea of beginninglessness in order to escape that charge.

As a matter of fact, the idea of being an object of *avidyā*'s concealment function is prior, in Advaita epistemology, to the idea of being an object of a cognitive mode, for the function of a cognition is just to destroy that concealment.

While this, to my mind, is an interpretation of Śaṁkara's statement which surprisingly enough none of the commentators give at *that* place, it is quite another question, if this idea of ignorance concealing the self, prior to, and independently of mundane experience and finite subjects, can be philosophically defended against well-known objections. If Śaṁkara's thesis is to be made tenable, this thesis needs to be understood and defended. I will not undertake that task here.

There is however a deep philosophical presupposition of such a thesis. Since *avidyā* is not, and cannot be conceived of, as a real other to the self in a non-dualistic philosophy such as Śaṁkara's, and since we are now talking of a role of *avidyā* (to conceal *ātman*)

that is prior to finite subjects, and since the *ātman* is, even in classical Advaita, both the locus and the object of *avidyā*, we cannot avoid the position that *avidyā* is but the *ātman*'s own self-objectifying function through which *ātman* constitutes itself as finite selves, a position which the classical exponents of Advaita have refused to accept. The reason for this refusal is what I take to be a correct apprehension that in order for *ātman* to be capable of self-objectification, some other parts of the Advaita concepts of *ātman*, *cit* and *avidyā* would need either to be rejected, or fundamentally revised.

NOTES

1. The commentary *Purnānandīya* explains: what is needed for *adhyāsa* is object-ness, not in the sense of being other than presentation (i.e. *bhānabhinnatva*), but only in the sense of being-the-locus-of-the-result-of-cognition (*phalāśrayatva*). The result of cognition is manifestation (*prakāśa*). But this belongs to the self always, and is not brought about, for the self is intrinsically self-manifesting.

8

Subject and Person: Eastern and Western Modes of Thinking about Man

I

I shall begin with a provisional, possibly a heuristic, distinction between the concepts of 'subject' and 'person', with the hope that it may help us to throw some light on a fundamental distinction between Indian and western modes of thinking about man. My specific concern, while I try to clarify the distinction I am hypothesizing, will be theory of knowledge and theory of action, and the relation between 'knowledge' and 'action'. The hypothesis I am proposing may be formulated as follows:

In both Indian and western philosophies, we find both these concepts: 'subject' and 'person'. 'Subject' is an epistemological concept. The subject is, ideally, the 'who' of knowledge. 'Person' is a practical concept. The person is the 'who' of action. While these preliminary, and therefore misleading, characteristics of the distinction need to be improved upon, for the present I want to hypothesize that in Indian thought both knowledge and action are subordinated to the concept of subject, whereas in western thought both are subordinated to the concept of person.

If stated in so general a fashion, like most generalities in comparative philosophy, counter examples come readily to the mind. Do not the Indian philosophers lay emphasis on practice, spiritual as well as empirical? What about the grand metaphysics of subjectivity, of the Cartesian/Husserlian (Transcendental) ego, and the Kantian 'I think'? These and many other considerations have led me to speak of the distinction, as formulated thus far, as 'provisional'. It shall be provisional, not only as long as we have not more precisely formulated the concepts but also as long as we have not more exactly located their roles in the total structure of the Indian and western

philosophies. Those, then, are the tasks before us—to let the hypothesized distinction serve as a guiding principle in our present attempt at doing comparative philosophy, and in that process to let the initial formulation of the distinction undergo such modification as will be made necessary as we go along this path.

II

The subject is spirit understood as consciousness, for which the world is object. If there is knowledge of the world, or of an object, that knowledge is for a subject. Subjectivity or consciousness is the source of that revelation which makes knowledge of object possible. An object as such does not reveal itself. It needs to be made an object *for* a subject. The word 'subjective', in its ordinary English usage, often signifies what is relative to a subject, and so lacks universality. But that precisely is being denied, by implication: as the concept of 'subject' is being formulated here, what is *for* a subject is *not relative* to it, but may be the content of a universally valid cognition. To be the subject of knowledge requires transcending one's personal interests and prejudices, and to attain universality, such that knowledge is, in principle, valid for everyone. Thus the epistemological subject is *disinterested* and also *universal*, for otherwise knowledge could not be objective and could not be valid for everyone. It is not being denied that there is a perfectly legitimate sense in which it is a *person* who knows. But, if a person's claim to *know* is to be sustained, then his being the person that he is should be irrelevant to his knowing what he knows. For what he knows should be an objective truth, which could be known by any other person as well. His *knowing* it requires that *qua* knower he be interest-free, even if he might have been led to his knowledge by interests and his knowledge may give rise to further interests. If a person cannot raise himself above his life of interest, if he cannot go beyond, or rather escape, the point of view relative to the sort of person he is, then he cannot know. In other words, in order to be able to know, he must be a subject, over and above being a person. Furthermore, being that for which the world is an object, the subject *qua* subject is also not a mundane thing, but a 'transcendental' principle.

The *person*, on the other hand, is a concrete, corporeal entity who calls himself 'I', a bodily-psychic unity that is appropriated into the

structure of a unitary self-consciousness. It is in the world, and with others. Its mode of being in the world is *not* an epistemological subject's having a world stand over against it, but a concernful, caring, willing and acting—temporally structured by systems of recalling, anticipating, and fulfilment-frustration. In the language of the Indian philosophers, the person is characterized by *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva*; he is an agent and an enjoyer; his being an enjoyer and being an agent together form one total structure of mundaneity. For the person, objects (*artha*) are primarily not objects (*viṣaya*) of knowledge, but objects of affective-volitional concern (*arthyate anena*). They are either attracting or repelling, either to be acquired/reached or shunned/avoided. In so far as it is *also* the person who knows, his knowledge enters into this structure and participates in determining as well as in being determined by the life of interest. As a mundane occurrent, knowledge of an object gives rise to desire (*icchā*) to acquire/shun it; such desire leads to appropriate action (*pravṛtti*), which ends either in success or failure giving rise to pleasure or pain as the case may be.

The Indian philosophers recognized this possibility of looking at knowledge in two radically different manners. From the point of view of the subject, knowledge is manifestation of the object; its entire purpose, its total *telos* is fulfilled in that manifestation. From the point of view of the person, knowledge is an event which impinges into the affective-volitional structure, giving rise to desire, appropriate action, success and failure, pleasure and pain.

It is, therefore, not true that Indian philosophy does not have a concept of person. It was not my intention to assert that this was the case. However, the concept of subject was the dominating concept, and under its dominance, the concept of person remained philosophically underdeveloped.

This primacy of the concept of 'subject' is exemplified, in different ways in several features of Indian thought:

(a) First, almost all Indian theories of knowledge conceive of knowing as manifesting, revealing, illuminating, and un-concealing the object of knowledge. Even where knowledge is propositional or inferential, what is known, precisely as it is known, is out there in the world independently of the knowledge. Buddhism alone had the concept of knowledge as construction, but even there the constructing, synthesizing agent is not a subjective unity, an ego or a

person; in fact, there is no agent other than the series of instantaneous cognitions with their inherited, but beginningless, tendency to conceptualize and objectivate. Although most Indian epistemologies recognized the role of the body in the acquisition of knowledge, that role, as well as the role of the mental and intellectual factors, lies only in *causing* knowledge to occur; however, when knowledge does occur, its sole function, *qua* knowledge, is to manifest its object. It is not surprising, therefore, that all Indian philosophies, except Buddhism, were realistic. This contrasts with the predominant tradition of modern Western thought, at least since Kant, that knowledge is synthesis, construction, interpretation of data in the light of conceptual framework, etc., etc.

(b) Where the concept of 'person' is most likely to be autonomous and irreducible, viz. in theory of action, we also find shadows of the dominance of the concept of 'subject'. In the mundane structure of desire, action, success/failure, pleasure/pain which centers around the concept of person, an action is done out of a desire or want and is intended to bring about a consequence which, in the long run, is satisfying the desire or removing the want. But such action 'binds' the person to that structure. Yet the same action which, when performed within the mundane structure, binds, may be a road to freedom if performed with 'non-attachment'. But how can the person who, by definition, leads a life of interest, act without attachment? Is not a 'disinterested person' an inconsistent concept, unless disinterestedness be a sort of interest? This seems to be so, when the *Bhagavadgītā* recommends that actions be performed not out of selfish interests but out of altruistic motives of '*loka saṁgraha*'. But the *Gītā* also speaks of complete *anāsakti*, of 'inaction in action', of renouncing the sense of being the doer, of seeing action as though it belonged to the mechanism of *māyā*. We have here an ethics of action in which the agent ceases to be the person that he is, but reduces himself to a *pure subject*. Universality (of moral action) is sought by progressively emptying the person of all contents and of all interests and by reducing himself to zero, to a mere witness-consciousness. What else but the primacy of the concept of 'subject' can lead to such a concept of moral action? We should remember, however, that this is *not* the concept of 'action' in the tradition of Hindu liturgy, social ethics, and law, where a complex nexus of duties and obligations are taken to bind the individual person to

other persons, to gods and to nature, and where a person's actions were supposed to carry the weight of tradition.

(c) The concept of person where it does appear to emerge in the philosophies, is a 'weak' concept. A concept of person is strong if it formulates an irreducible and unanalyzable unity. Examples are: the Kantian concept of 'end-in-itself', Scheler's concept of 'act-centre', and Strawson's concept of 'the subject of p-predicates'. A concept of person is weak if it formulates a unity that is analyzable into components, none of which on its part, yields a concept of person: such is the analysis of empirical self into *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* (which remains paradigmatic for Hindu thought). The *puruṣa* by itself, even if individualized, as in Sāṁkhya, or universalized as in some systems of Vedānta, is still a witness self, a transcendental observer, disinterested, neutral (*madhyastha*), the pure subject of knowledge but not an agent or enjoyer. Nor is the psycho-physical body-inner-sense-ego-*buddhi* complex by itself a person, for it is not self-conscious: it can, for example, act without knowing that it does so. The person is a derivative unity of two heterogeneous elements: a pure witness self, i.e. pure subject, and a psycho-physical complex. The latter provides the causal conditions of knowing, the former the final epistemic condition of 'manifestation'.

III

Western philosophy, especially since Descartes' founding of philosophy on the *ego cogito*, has been—as insisted upon by Heidegger—a metaphysics of subjectivity. How can we, in the face of such an authoritative characterization, hope to be able to say that it is *not so much* the concept of subject as that of person which determines western thought's understanding of man and his relation to world and the others? It should be emphasized that I have said 'not so much as'. In other words, while the role of subjectivity is not being denied, the hypothesis rather is, that the western attempts to understand the subject have been, more often than not, modeled after the concept of person. With the Greeks, the subject of knowledge is the rational *faculty* of an individual soul recollecting what is already implicit in it. The Cartesian *ego cogito* is the pure inner reflective life of the ego of the meditating philosopher, the residue that is left after the world of corporeal things, including the body of the

philosopher himself, has been subjected to methodical doubt. It is not the subject that is the ultimate condition of the possibility of knowledge and experience, but rather the apodictic basis on which *philosophy* as a rational reconstruction of the experience was sought to be founded. It is the person, stripped of his corporeality, in the interior of his *reflective* thinking, secure against possible doubt and error. But it is still the interior of a person, of a monad, but not the principle of subjectivity which is universal rather than individual. The Kantian 'I think', the transcendental unity of self-consciousness, is, to be sure, what I have said, the Cartesian *ego cogito* is not: it is the condition of the possibility of all knowledge and experience, and not the apodictic basis for *philosophy* as a science. It is not the interior of a person, for both the interior and the exterior belong equally well to the phenomenal world, to the domain of possible objects of experience. It is also not the ego in its reflective thinking act, but rather the unity which underlies, without necessarily surfacing to be explicitly recognized, even the most unreflective of our perceptual judgements. Thus far, it is indeed subjectivity in the true sense, subjectivity that is also the condition of the possibility of objectivity in the sense of inter-subjectivity. What it constitutes are not subjective-relative, but just the opposite: objective-universal and objective-necessary. But, at the same time, it should be noted that this Kantian unity *constitutes* objectivity; it is the unity of synthesis, Kant appears to have wavered between saying that the transcendental unity of apperception is the source of all constituting, synthesizing functions and saying that whereas all synthesis is the achievement of the faculty of imagination, understanding (which is the transcendental unity of apperception in relation to the synthesis of imagination) only raises the already achieved synthesis to the level of self-consciousness[1]. The constituting, synthesizing ego is but a demundanized rational ego, caught, not in the interiority of its reflective thinking about itself, but in its activity of perscribing laws unto nature. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to find, even in the First Critique, anticipations of the Second, to understand constitutive functions of subjectivity in the light of the legislative autonomy of the rational person as a moral being. The constituting ego is a transcendental, rational person. The Kantian Critique is a Philosophy of the French Revolution.

The same is no less true of Husserl's constituting transcendental

ego. Without entering into the complexities of this Husserlian concept, I would like to draw attention only to a couple of aspects in order to bring home my point. In the first place, the Husserlian transcendental ego (t.e.) is constitut*ing*, and to that extent partakes of my characterization of the Kantian transcendental unity of apperception. But its closeness to the concept of person becomes clearer still, more than in the case of the Kantian doctrine, when one recalls that, for Husserl, there is a 'wonderful parallelism' between the transcendental and the empirical, and also that the transcendental ego has a genesis, even if its genesis, as auto-genesis, is radically different from the 'origin' of objects in the intentional structure of acts. The parallelism thesis is to the effect that every empirical experience (*Erlebnis*), act or otherwise, may be, once it is subject to purification by the epoche, i.e. divested of its naivete, rehabilitated within the life of the transcendental ego, so that the transcendental ego and the empirical ego are both the same and yet not the same. The transcendental ego has all the richness and diversity of contents of the empirical ego, only *minus* the latter's naive self-understanding as a man in the world, as a bit of nature, i.e. as a mundane entity. The thesis of auto-genesis is to the effect that the transcendental ego is constituted through a genetic process of development, as intentional experiences, while they, as act-intentionalities, constitute the sense-structures of the objective world, also are unified, through associative synthesis and habitualities, into the unity of life of one ego.[2] Corresponding to the 'genesis' of the transcendental ego, we have—by virtue of the parallelism thesis—a possible thesis of the psycho-genesis of the empirical ego, confirmed by developmental psychology of the Piagetian sort. Also instructive, in our present context, is the concept of the transcendental ego's 'sphere of ownness', as outlined in § 44 of the *Cartesian Meditation*. Amongst the structures of this 'sphere of ownness', we have: the lived body as the field of sensations over which the ego 'rules'. It is also not surprising that the transcendental egos should belong to a transcendental community, or even that one would want to speak of a 'transcendental ancestor'.

As the transcendental ego, in its concreteness, moves closer to the concept of a transcendental person, the Husserlian 'transcendental subjectivity' comes more and more to oscillate between the 'transcendental observer' and the *concrete historical life of subjective experiences*,

whose two poles are the constituted world of objects and the transcendental ego. It is the former, namely the 'transcendental observer', which comes closer to the Hindu concept of a witness self (*sākṣī*).

IV

While characterizing a large segment of Western metaphysics as being *both* a metaphysics of presence and a philosophy of consciousness, modern critics have subjected both to a *radical* criticism. For this criticism, a philosophy of consciousness is committed to a metaphysics of presence inasmuch as consciousness is characterized as 'presence to itself' and also inasmuch as the world is presented to consciousness as a representation. It is to these two aspects of this criticism that we turn in order to test their validity in the context of a non-western, viz. Indian, metaphysics of subjectivity—leaving the question untouched but open, whether they are true of all western thinking on consciousness. In other words, we are asking two questions: can we say of all Indian philosophies of subjectivity: (a) that they understand its being as self-presence, and (b) that they regard consciousness as 'representative' and the being of the world as being-represented to consciousness? The answers to both the questions should be in the negative, if the questions pertain to the entire range of Indian thought. For just as there were philosophers who denied the self-presence or *svayaṁprakāśatva* of consciousness but continued to use the discourse of 'consciousness', there were also those who denied its representative function. In fact, the Indian philosophies include (a) those who regarded consciousness as self-presence and representational (*sākāra*); (b) those who regard it as self-presence but not representational (*nirākāra*); and (c) those who regard it as lacking in self-presence as well as in representational character.[3] The Buddhists held the first view, Advaita Vedānta the second, and the Nyāya the third. It was never regarded as *prima facie* to be the case that consciousness was to *represent* reality within it. In fact, the distinction between consciousness and mind (or the mental) helped most philosophers to transcend the concept of a representing consciousness. The mind, *manas*, was regarded either as an instrumental cause (as in Nyāya) of the production of knowledge while the cognitive occurrent was as little mental as the act of cutting was located in the knife one cuts with; or as a substance, subtle matter in fact, which undergoes modifications (*vṛtti*) to fit

the shape and form of the object apprehended, but which still is not awareness. Consciousness illuminates, without representing within it, all and sundry objects—outer and inner, objects as known and objects as unknown. The illuminating consciousness is not a representing consciousness. The intentional consciousness need not have to be representing.

V

There are two aspects in which the Indian thinking on subjectivity needs to be supplemented. In the first place, the concept of intentionality, the directedness of consciousness towards the world, has, more often than not, been neglected. The Nyāya recognizes the intrinsic object-directedness of all states of consciousness, but this recognition loses its effectiveness owing to the overall causal explanation of consciousness in the system, so that the intentional consciousness is reduced to one sort of objective property amongst others. The systems which recognize the subjectivity of consciousness, its trans-mundane character, tend to deny intentionality to it as in the two most influential systems: Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta. Śaivism possibly, and Rāmānuja to be sure, want to have both: consciousness as an irreducible phenomenon and its intentionality. But in Rāmānuja, the subject becomes a person. The inseparability of soul and body, *cit* and *acit*, becomes the decisive ontological category. It is perhaps in Śaivism that we have the most exciting possibilities of a developed phenomenology of subjectivity.

But once intentionality is ascribed to the non-mundane consciousness, such a consciousness, as the pure subjectivity, cannot *simply* manifest the world which stands over against it. For that mere illumination, the non-intentional self-presence of consciousness is enough. The intentional consciousness, if it will not simply represent the world within it as in a mirror, if it will not simply let the world emerge into light from darkness, i.e. be an object for it, shall also confer on it meaning and significance. It shall then constitute the world. But constitution is not an act of creation out of nothing, completed at one instant, but a historical process in which the new significations are constituted on the basis of sedimented layers of meanings. But as the intentional, temporal, historically constituting subjectivity assumes responsibility for the worlds it constitutes,

the reflective consciousness which lays bare this process of world-constitution becomes the 'transcendental observer'. Realism is preserved but recedes back: what is *merely* made to emerge into manifestedness is not the world (for that is being historically constituted), but that world-constituting function and process of subjectivity.

One of the reasons why this constitutive dimension of subjectivity was not generally appreciated in Indian thought is that the thought of grades of subjectivity, so much on the surface in the *Upaniṣads* and the literature on Yoga, never took roots in the major systems, where subjectivity, understood as awareness, was a *homogenous* source of illumination. It is here that contemporary Indian thought has valuable insights to offer and succeeded in making use of some neglected strands of the tradition. The idea of grades of consciousness has been elaborately worked out by Sri Aurobindo, and since, for him, each grade of consciousness has *its* own mode of intuition, there are grades of intuition too.[4] Each level of reality, material, vital, and the mental, embodies a corresponding level of consciousness. More directly pertinent for my present purpose is K.C. Bhattacharyya's concept of grades of subjectivity: the bodily, the psychic, and the spiritual.[5] But at each level, subjectivity is not what constitutes the corresponding object, but what enjoys itself as *freedom* from it. I should add, however, combining the insights of Husserlian phenomenology and K.C. Bhattacharyya, that transcendental subjectivity is both constitutive of, and enjoys its freedom from, the objectivities meant or intended. The world is constituted by transcendental subjectivity; and the latter being 'transcendental' is also trans-worldly.

Merleau-Ponty has often insisted that the objectification of the world and, correlatively, the interiorization of subjectivity into a purely inner with no exteriority, have their genesis in the 'original sin' of objectification of the body. Again, Indian thought's attitude towards the body exhibits the familiar discrepancy between a large mass of original insights embedded in the culture and practices and the systematized thoughts of the major systems. The major systems, leaving aside the Sāṁkhya-Yoga, have a fully objective conception of body. Not only is this so in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, but also in Vedānta. Body is *acit, jada*. The distinction between self and body is the most decisive meta-physical truth to be known and experienced. Parallel to this objective conception of body, there was also, in

Indian thought, a conception of body that removes body from the world of things and assigns to it a decisive and positive role in the cultivation of the subjective attitude. The understanding of the body in the language of the three *guṇas (sattva, rajas,* and *tamas)* which form the basis of the Sāṁkhya understanding of the universe in the same language, and the Yoga emphasis on the role of the body in spiritual life are suggestive of this positive role. For K.C. Bhattacharyya, the bodily subjectivity (or the felt, as contradistinguished from, the observed body) provides the first awareness of freedom from objects, and arouses a demand whose complete fulfillment requires the cultivation of the spiritual attitude.[6]

The respects, then, in which the concept of subjectivity in Indian thought needs to be improved upon are: (i) a recognition of intentionality as constitutive and (ii) a thematic use of the idea of grades of subjectivity whose foundation is the bodily subjectivity. To both, Indian thought can add, from within its own resources, the idea of freedom. The constitutive intentionality, if it is to be transcendental, has to be 'free' from what it constitutes. Each grade of subjectivity, then, would represent a *freedom from* whatever is its constitutive accomplishment.

VI

The reflections in this essay began with a hypothesis whose guidance we have followed, but which, we now find, founders. We began by suggesting that whereas Indian thought accorded primacy to the 'pure subject' for which the world is object, Western thought accords primacy to the person who lives in *his* world and the world of his community. Western attempts to comprehend subjectivity have resulted in a sort of transcendental person in a community of transcendental persons. Indian attempt to comprehend person have resulted in a 'weak' concept of person, according to which a person is a compound of two heterogeneous principles, *cit* and *acit*, consciousness and body. Western thought has the notion of constituting and therefore historical subjectivity, but needs that of 'transcendental observer' if relativism has to be overcome; Indian thought has the concept of *sākṣicaitanya*, the witness-consciousness, but what it is a witness to is a finished, objective world, not the world being constituted, through history, by a community of intentional egos.

As a consequence of this rapprochement, two contrasted concepts—'subject' and 'person'—exhibit themselves as two unstable poles between which man's understanding of himself necessarily moves. It is not so much in reducing the one to the other, as in recognizing this unstable oscillation that the more promising future for philosophical anthropology appears to lie.

NOTES

1. I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 119.
2. Cp. G. Funke, *Zur transzendentalen Phanomenologie* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1957).
3. For further discussion of these and other connected issues, see my 'Consciousness and Knowledge in Indian Philosophy'. *Philosophy East and West*, 29 (1979), 3–10.
4. Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine* (New York: Sri Aurobindo Library, 1949).
5. K.C. Bhattacharya, *The Subject as Freedom* (Amalner; Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1930). (Reprinted in K.C. Bhattacharya, *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. II, Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, 1958).
6. *The Subject as Freedom*, p. 103–5.

9

Reflections on the Nyāya Theory of Avayavipratyakṣa

It is well known that the Nyāya advocates an extreme form of direct realism and maintains that what we directly perceive are physical objects and not some intermediate entities called variously by philosophers 'ideas', 'contents' or even 'sense-data'[1]. Gotama's *sûtras* 2.1.31–2.1.36 and Vātsāyana's commentaries on them contain arguments which may be regarded as constituting a very effective defence of what has come to be called the physical object language as against the sense-datum language. Gotama's, as well as his commentator's, direct interest however is twofold. In the first place, they are out to refute the suggestion that perception is not an independent source of knowledge but a variety of inference. In the course of this refutation, they are led to their second point: they try to show that the object of perception, that is to say, the physical object, is not a mere assemblage of parts but a true unity of some unanalysable kind. Our task in this paper will be to bring out the relevance of these arguments in the light of contemporary discussions of the problem of perception.

It would at once be appreciated that the view that perception is a kind of inference is logically connected with the view that what we directly perceive are sense-data and not physical objects. For on this latter view the transition from the sense-data which alone are directly given to the physical object which we say we perceive can be effected only through some kind of inference—or if you like by some process of logical construction. In any case, the physical object which we say we perceive is not really perceived but either inferred or 'constructed'. If the modern logical constructionist claims that the Nyāya refutation of the inferential theory does not affect him for he too abandons inference in favour of logical construction, we may in that case implore him to have patience; for the Nyāya

has another point directly effective against him: this is the Nyāya contention that the physical object is a not further analysable unity. After showing how these Nyāya arguments constitute an effective plea in favour of the physical object language, we shall enquire into the precise nature of the unity characterizing the object of perception.

The view which Gotama seeks to refute is thus stated by him in sûtra 2.1.31: 'perception should really be regarded as inference, for we apprehend directly only a part of the object. Our knowledge of the object is based only on such partial apprehension.'[2] I say I perceive the yonder tree. But do I really perceive the tree? An object is properly said to be perceived by me only when our knowledge of it is caused by the contact of some sense organ of mine with that very object. But are my eyes in contact (without taking into consideration that peculiar sense in which the Nyāya speaks of such contacts) with the entire tree? Certainly not with the hind part hidden away from my sight, certainly not with the interior of the trunk, and so on. Only a part of the tree do I see. Why then do I say that I perceive the tree? What I actually do is that from this part which I really see I infer that there is a tree over there, so that my perception of the tree is really inference. The inference may be implicit or explicit or associational or a self-conscious process of reasoning; in any case, the same argument holds good. Further, there may be difference of opinion as to what exactly the part is. It is quite possible that Gotama has in his mind the Buddhist theory that the tree, in fact any object, is nothing but a mere aggregate of atoms, and this is how Vātsāyana interprets the intention of the *sûtra*. But it is also possible that the parts are nothing but the various qualities, the colour, the shape, the size, etc. which make up the object, for as is well known the *dravya*, according to the Sāṁkhya is a collection of such qualities (*guṇasamghāta*). Or in conformity with common sense, the parts of the tree may be regarded simply as its trunk, branches, leaves etc. In any case, the point under consideration is, if it is only a part or some parts that I see, what justifies me in saying that I perceive a tree over there.

Gotama and his commentator have advanced the following objections against such a view:

1. What I call the tree is either the mere assemblage of its parts or it is more than such assemblage. On either alternative the inferential

theory would not be tenable. Consider the first alternative that the tree is nothing but a mere assemblage. Only one part of this assemblage is directly seen. What then is inferred? The theory can only hold that from seeing this part, say the front part, we infer the other parts that are not seen. But neither the front part nor the hind part taken by itself is the tree. Hence what is inferred is not the tree but only the unseen part of the tree. My knowledge of the tree thereby has not been proved to be inferential. Similarly on the theory that the tree is more than the assemblage of parts, the inferential theory has no better chance of success. For in order to be able to infer B from A it is necessary either that B must be analytically contained within A or that B must always have been observed together with A. In the present case, only the second possibility is open. And yet since on this theory the whole is never perceived along with the part, the whole could not possibly be inferred from the part that is given. Hence the tree which is a whole that is more than the mere sum of its parts could not possibly be inferred on this theory.

2. We do not directly apprehend the mere part (*Naca ekadeśopalabdhiḥ*), for the whole, the tree itself, is also given through that part. This in fact is the central argument of the Naiyāyika. This thesis has two parts, each of which requires separate treatment. In the first place, it has to be shown that the tree—in fact any physical object—is more than a mere assemblage of its parts, that it is something new over and above the parts. But next it has to be shown that perception of this whole does not require perception of all its parts, so that the whole may be perfectly legitimately said to be perceived even if one is not directly perceiving all its parts. The view criticized here (that the tree is not being directly perceived for only a few of its parts are visible) is based on the wrong assumption that we must perceive all the parts of a whole in order to perceive the whole itself. The Nyāya rejects this assumption. In fact the perception of any of its parts may suffice for the perception of the whole.

3. Nyāya therefore takes great pains to prove that there is a whole that is other than the mere sum of the parts. Gotama devotes the sûtras 2.1.33–36 to this point but again returns to it in a later context in the sûtras 4.2.4–12. The commentator Vātsāyana and the later Naiyāyikas develop this theme in great detail, their principal

target for attack being the Buddhist. Here we shall only sum up the main Nyāya arguments relevant from our present point of view.

(a) If the tree be regarded as a mere aggregate of atoms, then the atoms being themselves supersensible, the tree itself would remain unsensed. If the tree remains unsensed, so also shall its colour, shape, size, position, etc. We could never also know it as a tree, that is to say, we could never perceive the universal treeness in it. Thus all the *padārthas* such as *dravya, guṇa, karma, sāmānya,* etc. would remain unperceived. But actually we do apprehend *dravya*; we also apprehend its quality, its activity, its class, etc.[3]

(b) I not only apprehend the tree over there but also apprehend it as one object. What could be the proper referent of such a statement as 'this is one object and that is another',—asks Vātsāyana.[4] Is the referent of such a statement itself one or many? If it be one, then that would amount to recognizing that the whole is one object, and not a mere sum of its parts. If, however, there be only parts, how can a mere plurality be referred to as one object? The sense of unity ('This is one') and the sense of plurality ('These are many') cannot refer to the same object.[5] The former refers to one object, not to a mere aggregate. The latter to an aggregate, but not to a unity. 'But', it may be asked, 'do we not refer to a wood or to an army as one object, although the wood or the army really is a mere aggregate of many different things? Why then would it not be possible in a similar manner to refer to a tree as one object though in reality it is a mere aggregate?'[6] To this, the Nyāya replies in the following manner. It is true we mistake from a distance, or on account of other *doṣas*, a mere aggregate or a plurality for a unity, so that instead of saying 'These are many', we say 'This is one'. Such a sense of unity is no doubt erroneous. But such an erroneous sense of unity is possible, only if there are other cases, where our sense of unity is right.[7] But if, as the Buddhist contends, all sense of unity is erroneous, then even those cases where all are agreed, a plurality is mistaken as a unity, would remain unexplained.[8] Vātsāyana anticipates the modern phenomenalists' view that we do have a right sense of unity, not of course in the case of our apprehension of a tree, but certainly in the case of our apprehension of a sense-datum, and has two replies to offer. First, since we have one instance of a sense of unity being right (e.g. 'This is one sound') and another instance of unity being wrong, i.e. misplaced (e.g.

'This wood is one object'), some satisfactory reason needs to be advanced, before assimilating the case under consideration ('This is one tree') to the one rather than to the other: the phenomenalist has given no satisfactory reason for assimilating it to the latter type. Secondly, the phenomenalist has no satisfactory reason for regarding what we call sound as one entity. Leaving apart Vācaspati's reminder that some of the Vaibhāṣikas in fact did regard even a sound as an aggregate of atoms, we have to remember the extreme difficulty—perhaps impossibility—of identifying a sense-datum as one sense-datum. Even if we are rightly able so to identify, the proper procedure would be to assimilate 'This is one sound' type of statement to 'This is one tree' type, rather than go about the other way. Vātsyāyana however has his own special reason for regarding 'This is one tree' as a right application of the concept of unity and not as a case of error. For we also say, 'This is a single, big, banyan tree'; in such a statement as this, bigness, oneness, and the specific and the generic characters of the tree are apprehended as belonging to the same locus (*samānādhikaraṇa*)—which proves that that which is one is also a tree and is big etc. Further, when we say that 'the two (A and B) are in contact', the contact is apprehended as belonging to the same locus as two-ness: in such a case it would amount to distorting the implication of such a statement if we say, instead, that it is really the many parts which are in contact.

(c) Now if there is such a whole that is other than the mere assemblage of parts, how is this whole related to the parts? The Buddhist might argue that since no satisfactory relation is conceivable why not abandon the hypothesis of such a distinct whole?[9] Either the parts are in the whole or the whole is in the parts, no third alternative being conceivable. The part cannot be in the whole for any one part cannot reside in the entire whole, the part and the whole having different extensions. Nor could it be said that a part resides in a certain region (*ekadeśa*) of the whole, for that region would itself be a part of the whole and there are no regions other than the parts. Exactly similar arguments can be used to prove that the whole cannot reside in the parts: the entire whole cannot reside in any one part, the latter being smaller in extension than the former and since the whole does not have regions other than the parts, it cannot also be said that it is one part in one region and another part in another region. Thus no relation between the whole and the

parts being conceivable, it would be safer to conclude that the so-called whole is a mere assemblage of parts.

To this Buddhist argument, Nyāya replies as follows. Nyāya, of course, does not accept the position that the parts reside in the whole. This position, seemingly acceptable to common sense, owes its obviousness to the unreflective identification of the whole with the sum of the parts. Once, however, the distinction and the peculiar unity of a whole are admitted, the parts cannot be accommodated within it; for the spaces—as the critic has pointed out—to which the parts may be allotted are themselves parts. The same difficulty, however, does not really vitiate the position that the whole resides in the parts. The critic's question, 'Does the whole in its entirety reside in a part or does it do so only partially?' is ruled out *ab initio*, for the words 'entire' and 'partial'—as Vātsyāyana points out—[10] have no application to a thing that is one. The word 'entire' means 'all of many things' and the word 'partial' means 'some amongst the many'.[11] Hence both apply only to a plurality. The whole, according to Nyāya, however, is one and not a mere aggregate: hence there is no question of treating it either in its entirety, or partially.[12] The whole, therefore, is present in each of the parts as well as in their totality.[13]

4. It has now to be shown that perception of all the parts is not a necessary condition of the perception of the whole residing in those parts. If this could be shown, it would follow that the tree may be legitimately said to be perceived even if some of the parts remain unperceived. What is necessary is that some of the parts should be perceived. The argument is simple. Since, as has just been shown, the whole itself, as a distinct entity, is present in each of its parts, the apprehension of a part involves the apprehension of the whole. It cannot be said that I am perceiving only a part or only some of the parts of the tree. True, there are some parts that remain hidden from me. But nevertheless I do perceive the tree through those parts that are exposed to me. Of the parts that are many, some are perceived, and some not. But the tree is one and not many. Being one, if it is perceived, it cannot also be unperceived, nor can it be perceived partially. Hence, I do perceive the tree though I do not perceive all its parts.

We sometimes speak of seeing more or less of a thing. From my window I can see only one side of the school building. I go round

the building, see its other sides and say I have now seen more of it. For Nyāya, all such statements are in a sense legitimate, but in another important sense misleading. If from the beginning I know it as a house, I have perceived the whole, and although I might go on increasing my knowledge of its parts, it is the same house which I continue perceiving; I do not, in that sense, come to perceive more of that entity.

What happens when I see the mere edge of a building so that I am not in a position to say what I see, a house or a pillar, a monument or a bandstand?[14] I do see a part of whatever the whole may be. But do I also see that whole? The Nyāya account of such a situation is based on the following important considerations. Though the perception of a part involves the perception of any one of the wholes residing in that part, it cannot be laid down as a general rule that the perception of a part necessarily involves the perception of a definite whole, resident in it. Let P be a part of W and Q a part of P. Both the wholes P and W are residing in Q. There are also many other wholes P′, P″,... resident in Q. It is quite possible that on perceiving Q I do not perceive W but perceive P or any other of the wholes residing in it. But I must, whenever I perceive it as part of a whole, in case it is so, that is to say, in case a whole is resident in Q.

5. Is it possible to maintain—as the modern sense-datum theorists do—that our perception begins (no matter whether the beginning is understood in the logical or in the psychological sense) with noticing the bare sense-data? Do we not, to start with, perceive a bare patch of colour, and only afterwards come to know of the physical object that is so coloured? Nyāya, it is now apparent, rejects this view. According to Nyāya, we never sense a mere colour, but always perceive a coloured object. The colour is always perceived as characterizing the physical object, and the fact of illusory appearance need not lead us to revise this account.

The point, however, to which we want to draw attention especially is this: within the categorial structure of the Nyāya ontology, the perception of a mere property is impossible. The perception of a quality (*guṇa*) is possible only through the *via media* of a substance (*dravya*). A quality is contacted through a relation of *saṁyukta samavāya*, which is a complex relation entailing a *saṁyoga* relation with the substance in which the quality is perceived as inhering.

To this, one might reply that such a *via media* is necessitated only by the categorial structure of the Nyāya ontology. True; but we may remind the sense-datum theorist that his view that what we sense is a mere colour is no less necessitated by the way he defines both 'sensing' and 'sense-datum'.

Thus according to Nyāya, we do not pass from the part to the whole nor do we pass from the sense-datum to the physical object. The part and the whole, the substance and the quality, are given together though not in the same manner.

II

Thus far it was our task to elaborate the arguments of Gotama and his commentator, with a view to exhibiting their relevance to the contemporary discussions of the problem of perception. What has been said would suffice, it is hoped, to show that the Nyāya distinction between *avayavin* and *avayava* is a most valuable means of rehabilitating the physical object language. It is now left for us to ask what precisely is the nature of the unity of the *avayavin*? The Nyāya, of course, tells us two things about it. It is in the first place something other than the mere assemblage of parts. And secondly the unity of the whole resides in each of the parts in the relation of *samavāya,* while it is wrong to say that the parts reside in the whole. In the following, we shall attempt a phenomenological interpretation of these two points, and in doing so, we shall, of course, depart from the naive-ontological attitude of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system. Before, however, we undertake this, it is necessary to draw attention to certain unsatisfactory features of the Nyāya account.

In the first place, it should be borne in mind—and this is not exactly pointing out a drawback of the theory—that Nyāya does not bring out the exact difference between the mode of perceiving the part and the mode of *perceiving* the whole. One of the ways of doing this *would have been* to say that whereas the part is perceived through the relation of *saṁyoga*, the whole which resides in the part by the relation of *samavāya* is perceived through the relation of *saṁyukta-samavāya*. Nyāya does not say this for Two obvious reasons. Two substances (*dravyas*) cannot, in accordance with the categorial structure of Nyāya ontology, enter into a *samavāya* relation

(which by definition is reserved only for certain cases that do not include the case where the relata are two *dravyas* not related as whole and part), and the whole being a *dravya* can only enter into *saṁyoga* relation with the sense organ. Further the supposition that the whole is perceived through the indirect relation of *saṁyukta-samavāya* would lead to the following grave difficulty. The part with which the sense organs are said to be in contact is itself a whole some of whose parts are unperceived; this whole, then, it must be said, is perceived exactly like the bigger one of which it is a part, indirectly through the relation of *saṁyukta-samavāya*. In this manner, since every part is a whole, we would be led to the unacceptable position that there is direct contact through *saṁyoga* only with the last constituents or atoms which are not any more wholes but which, according to Nyāya, are imperceptible.

Nyāya, therefore, holds that both the part and the whole are apprehended through *saṁyoga*. A whole is contacted through *saṁyoga*, although not all its parts are so contacted. Inevitably, however, different orders of *saṁyoga* would have to be admitted and the privilege of having first-order *saṁyoga* would be accredited only to the last imperceptible atoms. Though, however, such different orders of *saṁyoga* would have to be postulated, nothing phenomenologically corresponds to this in the subjective mode of awareness; for in each case, I have the same kind of *anuvyavasāya*, 'I perceive...' The reason for this is that every perceptible part is itself a whole. Since no perceptible substance could have the primary order of *saṁyoga*, the idea of its absolute givenness, in one of its senses, is here ruled out. This, in effect, means that every whole is perceived through some of its parts; and so on. Though in this manner every whole is perceived through some of its parts, this however is not the same as saying that it is inferred and not perceived. This, in fact, is the only manner in which a substance could possibly be directly perceived.[15]

The real difficulty with the Nyāya account does not lie here. It has to be sought in the arbitrary way it seeks to limit the conception of *avayavin*. Firstly, not all conjunctions of parts, it is said, give rise to true wholes. It is only a special kind of conjunction that is regarded as giving rise to a true whole. Now it seems to me that the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory is not quite clear about the precise nature of this special kind of conjunction. It also further seems to

me that no strict line of demarcation can be drawn between that conjunction of substances that gives rise to a true whole and that conjunction which does not, for one reason, amongst others, that the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy believes in the separability of the parts of even an *avayavin* (for the last mentioned reason, the unity of the *avayavin* cannot be regarded as what has come to be called an organic unity). No strict line of demarcation, in that case, could be drawn amongst physical objects, between genuine wholes and pseudo-wholes. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosopher supposedly has, in mind, the idea that genuine wholes are *produced* in a manner or in a sense in which the pseudo-wholes are not. What precisely this manner is, in what sense the idea of production applies to one and not to the other case, and how precisely the conjunction of parts in the one case differs from that in the other,—these are questions on which no further light could be thrown except by referring to the way a potter makes a pot or a carpenter a table. Perhaps the maker alone knows the secret, but who then can be sure that some whole has a maker and some others have not? Certainly the separate physical objects are conceived by Nyāya as true *avayavins*, in so far as the system believes in a maker for them all on the analogy of a potter. But why, then, are we debarred from treating the world as a whole as the ultimate *avayavin*? Nyāya avoids this consequence by taking God's authorship of the world to mean not that God has produced the world as a whole, regarded as one single entity, as the potter produces a pot, but only that His authorship pertains to each physical object taken separately.

We thus notice the extreme difficulty of limiting the concept of *avayavin* only to *some* wholes. It cannot be said that to regard the world as a whole as an *avayavin* would conflict with the idea of external relation and the pluralism that are basic to the Nyāya ontology. For if it did then the very admission of the limited *avayavin* would have given rise to the same difficulty though on a lesser scale.

It cannot also be argued that just as we directly perceive a physical object as *avayavin*—for *avayavitva* is rightly held in the theory to be perceptually known—so also we apprehend some of the physical objects as wholes that are not again parts of bigger wholes. In the words of Nyāya, we could say that *carama-avayavitva* is not perceptually determinable. That a given whole is not the part of a bigger whole is not given to perception.

The problem, therefore, with which we are faced is how best to assimilate the central point of the Nyāya conception of *avayavi-pratyakṣa* into a satisfactory theory of perception without limiting it in the way Nyāya does. To this task, then, we now turn.

III

A satisfactory theory of perception must have to avoid the atomistic conception of the given of the Humean-phenomenalistic sort. It has also to avoid the conception of the given which entails that the physical object is inferred but not perceived: this is the view which Gotama and Vātsyāyana combat. The physical object is directly perceived, though never are all its parts: this is a point which a sound theory of perception must admit if it is to be honest to phenomena. But there are two directions in which it is possible to extend and amplify the thesis, not in the interest of the theory, but at the dictates of phenomena.

In the first place, it is necessary to ask: what exactly is the mode in which the whole is present in the part? The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika answer is, of course, 'through the relation of *samavāya*'. But *samavāya* is also the relation by which qualities are present in substances, and universals in particulars. By including all these cases under one common type, we, of course, economize, but the idea of economy, however indispensable it may be in *constructing a theory*, may sometimes lead to a distortion of the phenomena. What is common to them all is a certain inseparability of the relata (*ayuta-siddhatva*), but beyond this they are most unlike each other. Hence to say that the whole is present in the parts by the relation of *samavāya*, is not only not very illuminating but may prove misleading. The whole is indeed present in the parts but not as one thing in another, not as a quality in a substance, nor as a universal in the particular. The whole is present in the part as the *intended*. The part, *qua* part, is, as it were, saturated with an intention that refers beyond it to the whole. The whole is, ontologically speaking, made up of parts. But phenomenologically speaking, it is the fulfilment of the intention awakened by the part. The perception of a part of the wall arouses the intention that demands fulfilment and would not be completely fulfilled short of the perception of all the parts. In this way, we can give sense both to the fact that we know more

or less about the whole and to the fact that the whole was given right from the beginning. The whole, as intended, was given right at the outset, but a progressive fulfilment of this intention is possible. Since, however all the parts can never come to be apprehended, a complete fulfilment of this intention is an unattainable ideal, an endless process of approximation. This, however, does not negate the other fact that it is always the same whole that is given as the all-pervading intention.

Secondly, it is necessary to make room for the phenomenon that our perception of a physical object is never that of an isolated self-complete atom but is always *out of* a situation, and that likewise it tends to pass beyond itself, or within itself for further determination. Now it seems possible to account for this character of our perceptual experience if we lift the arbitrary limitation imposed upon the concept of *avayavin*, so that every physical object awakens an intention towards self-transcendence inasmuch as it is constituent of a bigger whole. The Nyāya idea of a *samuhālambana* knowledge, though based on an undeniable phenomenon, is inadequate to account for that aspect of perceptual experience to which I am drawing attention: for in a piece of *samuhālambana* knowledge, all objects are determinately apprehended and possess equal importance, whereas in all perceptual experience there is always, besides the focus (which may contain one or more substantive) a fringe and a tendency of the focus either to pass beyond itself or to determine itself more precisely (corresponding to what Husserl calls the outer and the inner horizons). It cannot be said that the world is atomic and that therefore the supposed continuity and dynamism within perceptual experience is inadmissible, for we cannot argue from what the world is like to what our experience should be like. The correct procedure should be to start from the nature of experience from the phenomenologically descriptive datum and then—if one is still interested in ontology—to base one's conception of the world upon it. It cannot be argued that the supposed continuity—the fringe and the tendency—are not discernible in the linguistic expression of a perceptual knowledge which takes the simple form 'This is a jar'; for linguistic expression is not always a sure index to the nature of experience. It simplifies the datum by limiting itself always to the focus[16] and this simplification, one might suppose, is in part due to the practical interest that hovers around.

A satisfactory theory of perception has to make room for these two phenomenological data: the discreteness and the continuity of our perceptual experience. It is not a phenomenalistic atomism of the Humean-Buddhist type but only a physical object atomism of the Nyāya type that does justice to the former aspect. But a physical object atomism should have to accommodate the other aspect of our perceptual experience; otherwise, it, too, would be faulty by inadequacy. The continuity is no doubt interrupted, as the flow of mental states, in general, is interrupted in deep sleep or in swoon. But in every perception, there is a tendency towards self-transcendence or towards further self-determination, and this intention is imbedded not in our awareness, but in the very object of perceptual awareness, in so far as the objects of perceptual awareness constitute, by virtue of such intentions, one single world.

Before closing this discussion I shall consider only two amongst the many objections that might possibly be levelled against the theory of perception briefly sketched above. It may be urged that if the theory is true, then there would be no limit to what is given, so that it should, by implication, follow that in any perceptual situation the world as a whole is given, which is absurd. In the second place—and this shall follow from the above—there would remain no room for any other indirect, say e.g. inferential, mode of knowledge. Both the points together lead one to press the question: what in that case is not given?

As to the first question, my answer would be twofold. It has been said above that there is no general rule that the perception of a part necessarily involves the perception of any definite whole resident in it, though I must perceive some whole resident in it. Now in that case even if we admit that the world as the largest whole is resident in every part of it, it would not necessarily follow that the world as a whole is given in every perceptual situation. Since the world as a whole is not in fact given, we could only postulate some form of inadequacy inherent in every perceptual situation to present the world as a whole.

Secondly, saying that every perceptual situation gives rise to an intention that takes us beyond it does not imply that all such intentions are fulfilled. In fact, such intentions are more often than not frustrated owing to the intervention of a stronger cognitive or other interest.

Finally, it should be recognized that the world as a whole is not one object amongst others. It is rather the horizon or the dimension within which perceptions and their intentions are possible.

It should be clear from the above remarks that the theory of perception suggested in this essay does not necessarily lead to the absurdity that everything is all at once given. The distinction between the given and the not-given is not meant to be obliterated.

NOTES

1. In its theory of *savikalpa* perception, however, Nyāya is led to grant a peculiarly intermediate status to certain epistemic entities. This does not affect the basic direct realism of the system which is maintained with the help of the theory of *nirvikalpa* perception in which the object is directly given free from all epistemic adjuncts.
2. This is a rather free rendering of the *sûtra* which runs thus: '*Pratyakṣamanu-mānamekadeśagrahaṇādupalabdheḥ*'.
3. *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.34.
4. Commentary on *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.35.
5. Uddyotakara, *Vārtika* on *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.35.
6. *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.36.
7. Vātsāyana, '*Atasminstaditi pratyayasya pradhānāpekṣitatvāt pradhānāsidhiḥ*' commentary on *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.36.
8. Uddyotakara, '*Mithyāpratyaya apyete na bhavanti pradhānābhāvāt*' *Vārtika* on *Nyāyasûtra* 2.1.36.
9. Gotama 4.2.6
10. Commentary on *Nyāyasûtra* 4.2.11: '*Tavimau kṛtsnaikadeśabdau bhedaviṣayau naikasminnavayavinayupapadyate, bhedābhāvāditi*'.
11. Ibid.: '*Kṛtsnamityanekasyaśeṣabhidhānam, ekadeśa iti nānātve kasyacidabhidhānam*'.
12. When we speak, however, of the tree in its entirety or in its parts, these words are applied not directly to the tree itself but to the parts, only secondarily to the tree.
13. There is thus a parallelism between the way the whole resides in each part and the way a universal resides in each instance of it. This parallel justifies the inclusion of both relations under the same type: *samavāya*. (The parallel, however, fails, in that the whole also resides in the totality of its parts; while the universal does not reside in the totality of its instances).

14. This case is different from the case of doubt or error where I perceive a part, no doubt, but there are also certain vitiating factors (*doṣas*) that render the perception of the whole impossible, or there are conditions that render certain knowledge impossible and give rise, instead, to doubt.
15. The case, however, with either *guṇas* or universals is different, for these are not wholes made of parts, not *avayavins*. Though these are perceived through some composite relation like *samyukta-samavāya*, yet in that relation it is given all by itself and is not contacted through any of its parts (though again the *guṇa* is contacted through a substance, and a universal through its instances).
16. Nyāya also recognizes a similar limitation to the claim of linguistic expression to be index of experience: there is always, as a Nyāya rule runs, an unexpressed qualifier except in the case of universals. See Mohanty, *Gaṅgeśa's Theory of Truth*, Santiniketan, 1966 (Delhi 1989).

10

Nyāya Theory of Doubt

I

The Nyāya logic contains a theory of doubt. A preoccupation with the nature, origin and structure of doubt seems out of place in a logical system inasmuch as logic has been taken to be concerned, speaking rather broadly, with formally valid thought abstracted from its psychological context. Now, Nyāya logic—in fact all Indian logic—does not conform to this conception. It is in a broad sense it is of course a theory of inference.[1] But even as a theory of of knowledge, and concerns itself with all kinds of knowledge, the non-propositional and the invalid ones not excluding. In a narrower sense it is of course a theory of inference.[1] But even as a theory of inference, (i) it does not concern itself with the bare form, though some amount of formalism has been developed, and (ii) it does not separate logic from psychology in a way in which western formal logic has done. Consequently, it is as much interested in the psychological conditions of the origin of a certain type of knowledge, say for example of inference, as in the conditions of its logical validity.[2]

It is in the light of these remarks about the general nature of the Nyāya logic that we are to understand the reasons for its preoccupation with doubt. For, inquiry (or, as the *Nyāyabhāṣya* says, *pramāṇairar-thaparīkṣaṇam* i.e. the attempt to determine the nature of the object with the help of the various sources of true knowledge) presupposes a prior state of doubt; though the Nyāya allows for the case where we make an inference even when there is prior certainty, there being however a special desire to infer. The fact remains however that apart from such cases of intellectual curiosity to provide reasons for what one already knows for certain the most important stimulation

for making an inference is provided by a doubt about the presence of the *sādhya* in the *pakṣa* (e.g. of the fire in the hill).

It is further important to bear in mind the fact that for the Nyāya, as for most systems of Indian philosophy, doubt is a species of knowledge, so that if I have a doubt of the form 'Is S p or not?', most Indian logicians would say that I have a knowledge— though not a valid one about S. This rather strange contention, so much at variance with both the philosophical and the ordinary usages of the English word 'knowledge' may be accounted for in either of two ways. It may be either that the Indian philosophers, supported by the conventions of the Sanskrit language, are using the world in such a wide sense *as to* include even doubt and error. Or, it may be—and this seems to me to be the more reasonable account—that the Sanskrit word '*jñāna*' should not be rendered into the English word 'knowledge', so that doubt and error are species of *jñāna* but not of knowledge. '*Jñāna*' means any conscious state which is characterized by a reference to an object beyond it, and surely doubt and error are states in which we are conscious of something. To be conscious of something amounts, according to the Nyāya, to having a *jñāna* about that object.

There are various classifications of *jñāna*, the most usual one being into *anubhûti* and *smṛti* (memory). The former may conveniently be defined as all *jñāna* other than memory. *Anubhûti* again is usually subdivided into *pramā* (or true) and *apramā* (or false). A true *jñāna* is one in which the object is known exactly as it is, and a false one is one in which the object is known as what it is not.[3] False *jñāna* is either doubt or error. It may be noted that the exact equivalent of the English word 'knowledge', in this scheme, is '*pramājñāna*'. Doubt is a kind of false *jñāna*.

Since it has now been pointed out that '*jñāna*' is not strictly synonymous with 'knowledge', we shall henceforth in this paper use the word 'knowledge' as if it were so synonymous, and leave the matter at that with the hope that there would be no further scope for misunderstanding.

II

The *Siddhāntamuktāvali* defines doubt as a knowledge which is *ekadharmikaviruddhabhāvābhāvaprakārakam*, i.e. a knowledge which

has (two) contradictory *prakāras*—one positive and the other negative—but referring to the same substantive. From amongst the host of definitions to be found in the Nyāya literature, this one may be singled out for its precision and simplicity, and it may be worthwhile to fix upon it. For an explanation of the definition it is of course necessary to prefix a few words about the concept of *prakāra*.[4]

It is well known that according to the Nyāya, knowledge is ontically formless (*nirākāra*) and owes its determinations to its object. It is however capable of being logically analysed. Possibility of such analysis presupposes that knowledge has forms of its own in a quite different sense. But what precisely is this sense? The Nyāya no doubt advocates a direct realism, and holds that knowledge in an important sense has no forms of its own, that it is *nirākāra*, its specific forms being derived entirely from its object. However, the Nyāya also believes in the possibility of analysis of knowledge, which presupposes that knowledge has its constituent logical elements and relations.

In primary unreflective attitude, knowledge is directed towards its object but not towards itself. The content of knowledge is brought to light only in the subsequent reflective attitude. In this reflective awareness, it is the contents of the primary knowledge that are directly intended, whereas the object of the primary knowledge is intended only as ancillary (*pucchalagna*). All such contents of knowledge which reflection discovers are brought under one category, technically called '*viṣayatā*', which again is further subdivided into three sub-categories: *viśeṣyatā, prakāratā* and *samsargatā*. *Viśeṣyatā* is the general title for all knowledge contents referring to substantives, *prakāratā* for all contents referring to adjectives, and *saṁsargatā* for those that refer to relations.[5]

For illustration, consider the knowledge expressed in the judgement 'This is a pot' (*ayam ghaṭo*). This knowledge may be analysed, at the first instance, into the following contents:

1. a *prakāratā* referring to (the Nyāya would elliptically say, 'attached to') pot-ness;
2. a *viśeṣyatā* referring to the pot (in so far as pot-ness qualifies the pot);
3. a *prakāratā* referring to the pot (in so far the pot is a determination of the mere this);

4. a *viśeṣyatā* referring to the this (in so far as it is determined by the pot);
5. a *prakāratā* referring to this-ness (in so far as it qualifies the this); and
6. a second *viśeṣyatā* referring to the this (in so far as it is qualified by this-ness).

Let us now introduce a few symbolical devices with a view to facilitate a schematic representation of these contents in their mutual interrelations.

We symbolize a *viśeṣyatā* by enclosing the name for the corresponding element within the braces { }, and a *prakāratā* by enclosing the name for its corresponding element within the braces ( ).

Thus '{this}' and '(pot)' would read as 'the *viśeṣyatā* referring to this' and 'the *prakāratā* referring to pot' respectively.

If and when a certain *prakāratā* determines or limits a certain *viśeṣyatā* we shall simply write the symbol for the *viśeṣyatā* first and write that for the *prakāratā* after it. Thus '{this} (pot)' would read as 'the *viśeṣyatā* referring to *this* is determined by the *prakāratā* referring to pot'.

Enclosing the whole analysiens by the brackets [ ] and writing 'K' before it, we shall symbolize the knowledge whose logical structure is exhibited within the outermost brackets. Thus 'K [{this} (potness)] is to be read as 'the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to *this* is limited by the *prakāratā* referring to potness'.

' . ' would symbolize 'and' and '~' would symbolize 'not'. Thus 'K [{s} (p). {t} (q)]' would read as 'the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to s is limited by the *prakāratā* referring to p, and whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to t is limited by the *prakāratā* referring to q'. But 'K [{s} ((p).(q))]' would read as 'the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to s is limited by two *prakāratās*, one referring to p and the other referring to q'.

'K [{s} (~p)]' would read as 'the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to s is limited by the *prakāratā* referring to the negation or *abhāva* of p'. But 'K [{s~(p)]' would read as 'the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to s is not limited by the *prakāratā* referring to p. 'K [{s} ~ (~p)]' would on the other hand read as the knowledge whose *viśeṣyatā* referring to s is not limited by the *prakāratā* referring to the negation of p'.

The Nyāya defines a *niścaya* or a certain knowledge as one which,

not having ~ as a *parkāra* has p as a *prakāra* (where, as here, p is a term-variable).[6] Following the symbolic conventions stated above, we may then define a *niścaya* as

K [{s} (p). {s} ~ (~p)] . . . (i)

As contrasted with *niścaya*, a doubt may then be defined as a knowledge which has two mutually incompatible predicates (*ekadharmikaviruddhabhāvābhāvaprakārakam*) one of which is the negation of the other. In the case of the doubt 'is this a man or a lamp-post?', two mutually incompatible predicates are being employed. It is however not sufficient for a knowledge to be called a doubt that it should have two imcompatible predicates, for it may be—as in the case of the so-called *samuccayajñāna*—that the two incompatible predicates are referred to two different subjects (e.g. 'This is a man and that is a lamp-post') If *samuccayajñāna* is to be represented symbolically as

K [{s} (p).{t} (q)] . . . (2), a doubt has to be represented as

K [{s} (p).{s} (q)], where p and q are mutually incompatible predicates . . . (3)

Thus there are two essential components of doubt. In the first place, the predicates must be mutually incompatible. Secondly, they must be referred to the same subject. We shall enquire a little more into each of these.

That the predicates of a doubt should be incompatibles is suggested by the connective 'or.'[7] The *Rāmarudri* defines incompatibility thus: '*virodhaśca tadadhikaraṇāvṛttitvam*'.[8] On this definition, to say that p and q are incompatibles would mean that one of them is never present in the locus of the other. The author of the *Nyāyalīlāvatī* is not satisfied with this definition of incompatibility, for in that case the definition of doubt would illegitimately apply to such a case of error as 'This conchshell is yellow' whose analysis may be stated as K [{this} (conchshellness). {this} (yellowness)], where, granted that conch-shells are always white and never yellow, the two predicates are incompatibles according to the definition of incompatibility given above. It is necessary therefore that the two predicates should be logical contradictories, 'p' and '~p', one of which is *bhāva* and the other *abhāva*. Doubt in that case would be defined as '*bhāvābhāvaprakārakajñānam*' and symbolically represented,

instead of (3), as:

$$K [\{s\} (p).\{s\} (\sim p)] \ldots (4)$$

The adjective '*viruddha*' (incompatible, or opposed) may still be regarded as not redundant inasmuch as there may be cases where 'p' and '~p' may be predicated of the same subject without it being a case of doubt, as e.g. in the judgment 'The yonder tree both has and has not contact with a monkey.' In this case, contact with the monkey (*kapisaṁyoga*) and absence of such a contact may both be rightly predicated of the same thing at the same time, for it may have the contact in one part of it, and absence of it in another part. *Dinakarī* therefore suggests that the adjective '*viruddha*' has significance. Even the contradictory predicates must be really incompatibles. Doubt then is *viruddhabhāvābhāvaprakārakajñānam.*[9]

I think, however, that the adjective 'viruddha' is superfluous. The two predicates 'contact' and 'absence of contact' become incompatibles as soon as the subject is further determined. That the subject of both is to be the same implies, strictly understood, that the two subjects must have the same limitor (*avacchedaka*). Referred to the same tree in the same part of it at the same time, i.e. in the same spatio-temporal limitations, the two predicates would certainly constitute a case of doubt.

This shows the importance of the second component of the definition of doubt, namely, the requirement that the two predicates must be referred to the same subject. The idea of sameness is deceptive. Consider a deliberate contradictory judgement (*āhāryajñāna*) of the form 'This hill without fire has a fire in it' ('*nirbahni parvato bahnimāniti*') whose form is 'S which is ~p is p.' Here two mutually opposed and contradictory predicates are being referred to the same subject, and yet we do not have a case of doubt. Following *Rāmarudri*, we may say that the analysis of such a case shows its form to be

$$K [\{\{s\} (\sim p)\} (p)] \ldots (5)$$

which is different from K [{s} (p).{s} (~p)]. The difference, likely to be obvious from a mere inspection of the two schemata, lies in the fact that in the case of (5) ~p is predicated of mere s whereas p is predicated of s as qualified by ~p, while in (4) both p and ~p are predicated of one and the same s.

The definition may nevertheless seem to apply to cases of deliberate contradictory judgements of the form 'S is both p and ~p' which

clearly are not cases of doubt. However, such judgements may be regarded as carrying only *śābdajñāna*, so that the *prakāras* are not 'p' and '~p' themselves but the property that 'p' and '~p' are *prakāras* (*virodhinānāprakārakatvaprakāraka*). This serves to distinguish a mere *śābda* awareness of a contradiction from a doubt where p and ~p themselves are the prakāras (*virodhinānāprakāraka*) This ingenuous dictinction drawn by Vardhamāna both in *Līlāvatiprakāśa*[10] and in *Kiraṇāvaliprakāśa*,[11] may have its source in the consideration that a *śābda* knowledge is mediated through a sentence, so that in this case of merely verbal knowledge, 'p' and '~p' directly qualify the sentence and the fact of their so qualifying the sentence may then be regarded as qualifying the resulting knowledge. In our symbolism, this case may be represented as

K [{s}.((p).(~p))] . . . (6)

Gadādhara holds that the two contents or *viśeṣyatās* belonging to a doubt have the following three properties;

1. One of them is incompatible with the other in the sense that one acts as a hindrance (*pratibandhaka*) to the other:
2. nevertheless, the two are co-present; and
3. the one content belongs to the knowledge only as qualified by the other, and therefore not as an independent content.[12]

The Naiyāyikas have further discussed the question—not of great importance though—if a doubt has two predicates or four. Added to this is the controversy, touched upon earlier, as to whether in case there are two alternatives they are both positive incompatibles or logical contradictories. We get accordingly three schemata which may be exhibited as follows:

(a) Two positive alternatives theory:
K {s} (p).{s} (q)], p and q being imcompatibles.
(b) One positive and the other negative alternative theory:
K [{s} (p).{s} (~p)]
(c) Four alternatives theory:
K [{s} (p).{s} (~p).{s} (q).{s} (~q)]

There seems nevertheless to be something about a doubt which escapes the attempt to analyse it logically. We may grant that the Nyāya is not committing the obvious error of mistaking a doubt-sentence for a proportional one. What the Naiyāyika seeks to analyse is not the sentence, not the proposition certainly in this case—for

there is no proposition here—but the *jñāna* as apprehended in reflective awareness. In spite of all this we may nevertheless point out that the above analysis still misses something essential to doubt *qua* doubt.

There were amongst the Naiyāyikas some who sought to reduce a doubt-sentence to the compresence of two contradictory assertions 'S is p' and 'S in not p'. This view traditionally ascribed to the *author of Ratnakoṣa* is voiced by Gaṅgeśa, when he in course of an argumentation with the Mīmāṁsakas, contends that doubt is nothing but such joint predication.[13] Happily, this view is not shared by Gaṅgeśa himself, for he tells us soon after that doubts are characterized by *Kotyutkatatva*, i.e. difference in the relative strength of the alternative predicates. In a mere compresence of two predications, the question of relative strength of the alternatives would not arise. Vācaspati refers to three possibilities from this point of view: either the affirmative predicate (p) is relatively stronger, or the negative predicate ($\sim$p) is the stronger one, or it may be that both the alternatives are equally strong.[14] In any case, doubt would involve an oscillation of the mind between the two alternatives: it is this which he has in mind when Vardhamāna so aptly characterizes doubt as *dolāyitānekakotika*,[15] i.e. as a knowledge where there is, as it were, an oscillation between the alternatives. I think, it is this state of the mind, this *dolāyitatva* that is an essential character of doubt and should be added to the structural analysis explained above,—unless of course it could be shown that such a character follows from the structure revealed in (4). I do not know however how this could be shown.

Distinction should nevertheless be drawn between doubt and question. Doubt is no doubt one of the sources of enquiry, though not all doubt is so. There are doubts that are not important enough and are just set aside and do not initiate any enquiry whatsoever.[16]

III

Having given an outline of the structural analysis of doubt given by the Naiyāyikas, we may now turn to certain ancillary issues concerning it. There is in the first place the question of classifying doubt into various types, and there is secondly the question regarding the causes of doubt. The Naiyāyikas have generally taken up

these two issues together and have classified doubt according to its origination. The Naiyāyikas are not all agreed about any of these issues, and Gotama's *sûtra* on this has been subjected to conflicting interpretations. Vātsyāyana, Uddyotakara and Vācaspati differ amongst themselves, not to speak of their differences from the Navya-Naiyāyikas. It is difficult to evolve an agreed formula. I give below what seems to me to be an account which cuts across the divergences of opinion about the causes of doubt.

These causes may be divided into two groups: the general causes and the specific causes. By the general causes of doubt we mean those factors which must be present so that any doubt at all may occur. They are in other words causes of doubt *qua* doubt. The specific causes are the causes only of specific kinds of doubt, and are not therefore to be regarded as causes of doubt *qua* doubt. If doubts are to be grouped in accordance with their origination, it is only these latter, namely the specific causes that are to be taken into consideration.

A. The general causes may be brought under two sub-heads, the positive and the negative.

(a) The positive general causes of doubt are two: (i) *dharmijñāna* and (ii) *viśeṣasmṛti*.

(i) In the first place, a doubt *qua* doubt presupposes a knowledge of some sort of the *dharmi*, i.e. the substantive of which the two mutually contradictory predicates are predicates. It should be obvious that this knowledge of the *dharmi* should be a *niścaya* i.e. a certainty, and cannot itself be a doubt, for otherwise the latter doubt would presuppose a further *dharmijñāna,* thus leading to an infinite regress. Consider the doubt 'Is this a man or not?' Here though the doubter is not sure whether this is a man or not, he has a certain apprehension of the object here before him as a this, and may be along with some other generic characters. Gaṅgeśa suggests two reasons why this factor should be regarded as an essential precondition of all doubt *qua* doubt. If *dharmijñāna* were not required for all doubts, there ought not to have been the rule that all doubts must have some substantive.[17] In fact, however, doubts are of the form K [{s} (p).{s} (~p)], and not of the form K [(p).(~p)]. Further, the property that in doubts one of the alternatives may be stronger than the other (*kotyutkatatva*) cannot be explained otherwise, for in the knowledge K [(p).(~p)], 'p' and '~p' should have no difference in status; any

difference which they may have must be in their relation to the 's' which is being apprehended as 's'.

(ii) Mere *dharmijñāna* is not enough to produce a doubt. Moreover mere knowledge of 's' as 's' does not explain why the doubt should have the predicates 'p' and '~p' and not the predicates, let us say, 'q' and '~q'. We need therefore another positive, general condition, namely a remembrance of the two alternatives 'p' and '~p'. This is what is called *viśeṣasmṛti*, 'p' and '~p' being the *viśeṣas* or specific characters. It may also be called *kotismṛti* for they are also called the *kotis* or alternatives.

(b) The negative general condition necessary for all doubts *qua* doubt is non-perception of the specific characters as belonging to the substantive (*viśeṣa-adarśana*). Definite knowledge of the presence of any of the specific characters in the substantive is a hindrance to doubt. If the supposed doubter knew for certain that s has p, or if he knows for certain that s has ~p, then the doubt 'Is s p or ~p?' would not obviously arise. Hence the absence of such specific knowledge is a necessary condition of all doubt *qua* doubt.[18]

B. While the conditions listed under A are necessary for there being any doubt at all, there are however other special causes of specific types of doubts. Thus doubts may be caused by either (a) perception of the common character (*samānadharmopapatti*), or (b) perception of an uncommon character (*anekadharmopapatti*), or (c) hearing contradictory views expressed by parties opposed over an issue (*vipratipatti*), or (d) reflection on the absence of any concommitance between being experienced and being real and between not being experienced and being unreal (*Upalabdhianupalabdhi-avyavasthā*). Let us explain each one of these with suitable examples.

(a) A doubt of the form 'Is s p or not?' may arise from perception of some character common to both 'p' and 'not-p' (provided of course, it is accompanied by perception of s as s, non-perception of the specific characters 'p' and 'not-p', and remembrance of those specific alternatives). By a common character is here meant any character or characters which are present where p-ness is present, but is also present where p-ness is not present, i.e. which may be accompanied either by p-ness or by not-p-ness. Seeing something at a distance (s as mere this), and perceiving its height, size, shape etc. which could very well belong to a man or to a dead tree trunk, on might doubt 'Is this a man or a dead tree trunk?' If at this stage

he could detect any of the specific properties which goes only with manhood, then his doubt would give place to the certainty 'This is a man'. Now it seems clear that in doubts arising from the perception of a common character in the above sense, the alternatives tend to be positive contraries instead of being logical contradictories, a point recognized by Vācaspati when he says that doubts of this kind are characterized by *vidhiprādhānya*.

(b) A doubt may arise also from the perception of an uncommon character. On perceiving some uncommon character in some substantives s, one may be haunted by the doubt what character it shares or has in common with others. The Naiyāyika's favourite example is this: if sound is known merely as possessing soundness (which is its distinguishing and in that sense uncommon character) one may very well doubt if it over and above this possesses eternality or non-eternality, for both are compatible with soundness.

The distinction between cases under (a) and those under (b) is apt to be overlooked. In case (a), one perceives in s a character x which is common in the sense that it *as a matter of fact* accompanies and is consistent with both the alternatives. It accompanies p-ness as well as not-p-ness. In case (b), a character x is perceived in s such that x belongs to s alone, and x is consistent with both, but not known to accompany either of p-ness and not-p-ness.

(c) When in course of a disputation, the opposed and contrasting parties put forward their respective theses, a hearer is very likely to be overcome by a doubt as to which of the theses is the correct one. The older Naiyāyikas take this as a special case of doubt, where the doubt is *śābda*, i.e. generated by hearing and understanding of the words uttered by the disputing parties. In such a case, of course, doubt arises not in the mind of the disputationists, for each of them is convinced of the correctness of his own contention, but in a neutral observer (*madhyastha*) who is confused by the mere statements of the contradictory positions advocated in the absence of any decisive supporting arguments. There must be absence, in other words, of *anyatarasādhakahetu*. Such doubt, once it has arisen, cannot be removed by the mere collective judgement (or, *sampratipatti*) of the form 'A holds p to be the case, and B holds not-p to be the case'.[19] What is necessary is the ascertainment which of the two is really the case.

Naiyāyikas are divided over the issue whether a doubt arising from this special cause is to be called *śābda* or *mānasa*. The question

in other words is: does the doubt arise through hearing, or does it arise through the operation of mind (*manas*)? Raghunātha defends the former alternative and has the older authorities on his side.[20] Viśvanātha argues in favour of the latter alternative, and makes use of the premise that *śābda* as a rule is a source of certainty so that by itself it cannot generate doubt.[21] What happens according to him is that the statements of the disputing parties give rise to remembrance of the alternatives. This latter knowledge, then, provided all the other required conditions are present, gives rise to doubt which therefore is *mānasa* and not *śābda*.

(d) Being an object of experience is not a sure mark of being real. Epistemological objecthood may or may not be accompanied by ontological independence. Both the real water and the water-in-the-mirage are objects of experience. Both the real snake and the illusory snake-in-the-rope are seen. Therefore from the mere fact that something is being experienced one cannot make sure as to whether the experienced something is also real or not. There may therefore arise in such a case doubt about its reality or unreality.

Similarly not being an object of experience is not a sure mark of unreality. The unreal of course may not be experienced. But so also frequently is the real. Not all that is real is experienced. Therefore, from the mere fact that something is not being experienced nothing can be ascertained as regards its reality or unreality. There may therefore arise in such a case doubt about the reality or unreality of what is not being experienced.

Attempts have been made to explain case (d) in other ways. Consider the possibility (d′): Supposing I have a knowledge which certainly possesses the generic character of experience-ness or *jñānatva*. This generic character however is consistent with, and is accompanied by, either of the two specific characters, the property of having a real object (*sadviṣayakatva*) and the property of having an unreal object (*asadviṣayakatva*). If we do not experience any of these specific characters in the knowledge under consideration there may be a doubt in accordance with rule (a).

However, there is a difference between (d) and (d′). In (d), the doubt concerns the object of the experience under consideration. The object being an epistemological object may or may not be ontologically real. In (d′), on the other hand, the doubt is about the knowledge or experience itself. Its being an experience does

not entail either that it is *sadviṣyayka* (true) or that it is *asadviṣayaka* (false).

It has also been contended by others[22] that (d) is a special case of another rule (d″): doubt about the truth of a knowledge gives rise to doubt about the reality of the object of that knowledge (*prāmāṇyasaṁśayāt viṣayasamśayaḥ*). Let K be a knowledge having O for its object. If for any reason I have a doubt of the form 'Is K true or not?' this would generate a further doubt of the form 'Is O real or not?'

There is again a nice point of difference between (d) and (d″). In case of (d) what causes doubt about the reality or unreality of O is not a prior doubt in the truth of K but the perception of the generic character of O as an object of knowledge, this character being consistent with both the reality and unreality of O.

The importance of the rule (d″)—and one reason why it cannot be reduced to any other—is that though a prior certainty about an object (*arthaniścaya*) rules out the possibility of doubt about the same object, nevertheless such doubt may be caused by an intervening doubt in the truth of that initial certainty. The sequence in such cases may be set down thus:

1. Certainty, 'K', about O. 2. Doubt: 'Is K true'?
3. Doubt: 'Is O real'?

In the absence of (2), (3) cannot take place when (1) has already been there, the general rule being that though doubt does not obstruct certainty (for otherwise doubt would never be resolved), yet certainty does exclude doubt except in the case coming under (d″).

(e) Another rule, which according to many comes under the '*ca*' of Gotama's sûtra 1.1.23, is to the effect that a doubt about the pervaded gives rise to a doubt about the pervader (*vyāpyasandehāt vyāpakasandeha*).[23] Smoke, for example, is pervaded (*vyāpya*) by fire which is the pervader (*vyāpaka*) in relation to it. Wherever there is smoke, there is fire. Smoke is never present in any locus of the absence of fire. If a person who knows this relationship between smoke and fire perceives smoke in a distant hill and recognizes the smoke as the *vyāpya* of fire, he would naturally infer, and so arrive at a certainty that the hill also possesses fire. If however such a person, for whatever reason, comes to have the doubt whether what looks like smoke is really smoke or not, he would be led to the further doubt whether the hill possesses fire or not. Of course,

here as before in the case of inference, it is necessary that smoke should have been earlier known and in the present recognised to be a *vyāpya* of fire. It also holds good that certainty about the *vyāpya* of any one of the alternatives of a doubt would necessarily put an end of the doubt. Consider the doubt 'Is this a man or not?' As soon as the doubter comes to perceive clearly such features as hands, feet etc. in the object before him which is being referred to as this, his doubt would give place to the certainty 'This is a man', for the property of possessing limbs is a sure mark of manhood. Hence, the *viśeṣādarśana* or non-perception of specific characters—which is one of the general conditions of all doubt *qua* doubt—must be taken to include non-perception of the marks (or *vyāpyas*) of the specific characters.

IV

In this section we propose to examine Descartes's doubt with the help of the Nyāya theory outlined above. Such a confrontation, it is hoped, will help us to throw light on both the sides, and thereby on the nature of doubt *qua* doubt.

Descartes's doubt applies in the first instance to anything and everything in the world and also to any and every knowledge and experience. In his first *Meditation* and also in *The Principles of Philosophy, Part I*, he gives us the grounds of his universal doubt. These grounds are the following:

1. The senses are often found to mislead us. We cannot therefore place absolute confidence in them, for 'it would be imprudent to trust too much to what has even once deceived us'.[24]

2. Secondly, 'in dreams we perpetually seem to perceive or imagine innumerable objects which have no existence'.[25]

2a. There are, Descartes argues, 'no certain marks by which the state of waking can ever be distinguished from sleep',[26] i.e. from the state of dreaming.

3. With regard to the supposedly self-evident truths of mathematics Descartes employs the following two arguments:

a. It is often found that men fall into error even in such matters and regard as self-evident what is really false.[27]

b. More important for Descartes is this one: We believe that God

who created us is all-powerful. We do not however know for certain whether this all-powerful God is not a deceiver. It May therefore be that he created us with the will to deceive us. If on the other hand the creator is not all-powerful then we shall be more imperfect and more likely to be under continued deception.

4. There is a final argument which, as would be clear from the remarks to follow is of the highest importance. We possess a free will and we are therefore free to withhold our assent from whatever is doubtful. In other words, we may suspend our belief in whatever is not 'manifestly certain and undoubted'.[28]

It seems clear that Descartes' arguments (1) and (2) come under the Nyāya rule (d), i.e. they are really based upon what the Nyāya calls *Upalabdhi-avyavasthā*. In this respect these two really constitute one argument. They appeal to the fact that there is no fixed correlation between being an object of experience and being real. The unreal is as much an object of experience as the real. What is presented through the senses may then be unreal, just as what is presented in a dream may seem to be real. The doubt therefore may be accounted for by (i) perception (mentally) of the generic character of objectivity (*jñānaviṣayatva*) and (ii) uncertainty as to reality or unreality, arising out of the absence of any settled order in such matters.

The argument (2a) however presents great difficulty. What is necessary for the possibility of a doubt of the form 'Am I awake or am I dreaming?' (='Is this a dream or is it a waking experience?') is that I should perceive the generic character of experience-ness (*jñānatva*), and yet fail to perceive either of the two specific characters (which in the present case are the property of being a dream and the property of being a waking experience) or their respective marks. The possibility is a *priori* implied therein that there are such marks, and that it is possible to distinguish between the two specific characters though in any given case one may fail to do so. Descartes however contends that there are 'no certain marks' by which one may be distinguished from the other. If two properties 'p' and 'q' cannot at all be distinguished, i.e. no sure mark exists which could serve the purpose, then there is no question of the non-perception of such marks and hence no possibility of doubt with regard to them. If on the other hand there are such marks though Descartes fails to adduce any then his doubt cannot claim universality. He could then

only say that he could not then and there distinguish the one from the other. Moreover, if no sure mark of dream experience were known to him on what ground could he almost persuade himself to think that he was then dreaming?[29] The point is that a doubt of the form 'Is S p or q?' requires both that 'p' and 'q' are distinct with their respective distinguishing marks and that in a given case there is a non-perception of them. These two conditions defeat the possibility of a universal scepticism.

The argument (3a) is formally of the same type as the first argument and is to the effect that where there is the least chance of error, where in other words there is no *upalabdhivyavasthā* i.e. no rule that only the real is experienced, one may reasonably doubt. This applies as much to sense-perception as to mathematics. And incidentally it may be pointed out that the argument applied to mathematical truths is close to the point of view of the Nyāya logic which does not admit the distinctions between analytic and synthetic, *a priori* and *a posteriori*, self-evident and not-self-evident truths. The subjective possibility of error being always there, there may be doubt regarding the truth of any knowledge whatsoever as also a resulting doubt about the reality of the object of such knowledge.

However, none of the argument 1–3, though sanctioned by the Nyāya rules, can be used for the purpose of justifying a universal scepticism. For among the necessary conditions of doubt *qua* doubt there is at least one which constitutes a certainty: this is the *dharmijñāna* or knowledge of the substantive. In any particular doubt there must be certainty about the *dharmi*. Basing on the facts of error, we may have two kinds of doubt: the one of the same sort as 'Is this a rope or a snake?', another of the philosophical kind: 'Is sense-perception valid or not?' or 'Is the world real or imagined?' It is easy to show that doubts of the second kind are self-stultifying, for they question the very reality of their own respective *dharmis* which they cannot consistently do.

Two other arguments of Descartes remain to be examined. The doubt involved in 3(b) may be restated thus:

'Is God who is known to be all-powerful also a deceiver or not? The doubt so formulated seems to be sanctioned by the Nyāya rule B(b). Here we have an uncommon character belonging to the *dharmi* i.e. being both the creator of the world and all-powerful, and we are left in doubt as to which of the two properties 'being a deceiver'

and 'being veracious'—both compatible with the above uncommon character—further belongs to it. Such a doubt, if it comes to happen, would no doubt have a limitless scope with regard to the truth of all our experience. It would not however apply to our belief in the fact that there is an all-powerful creator. The argument is to that extent effective, but loses its force because of the fact that its starting point is a theological belief from which a reflective philosopher may not start.

Descartes's *Cogito* which sets a limit to his doubt may be interpreted as the ultimate *dharmi*, certainty about which is presupposed in any doubt. But it should be pointed out that the 'I' is the *dharmi* only in the reflective judgements of the form 'I know', 'I perceive' etc., but not in the unreflective judgements of the form 'This wall is white', 'The yonder bird is a crow' etc. Doubt's being of the form 'Is this wall white or not?' 'Is the yonder bird a crow or not?' they do not presuppose certainty about the 'I' as their *dharmi*. In case however these doubts come to occur through the instrumentality of doubts of the validity of the respective knowledges (as per rule d″), then of course certainty about the 'I' would be presupposed, for the 'I' is the *dharmi* in the latter doubts that have the form 'Did I know rightly or not?' If Descartes's doubt is to justify certainty about the *Cogito*, then he must be interpreted as having taken to this reflective way of having first doubted the validity (*prāmāṇya*) of our beliefs, and then arrived at the doubt about the reality of the objects of those beliefs. Such an interpretation is amply borne out by Descartes's writings.

One of the chief grounds sustaining Descartes's universal scepticism lies hidden in the last of his arguments. The human will, he writes, is free and so is also free to withhold its assent from whatever is doubtful. It must readily be seen that this argument represents a type of thinking foreign to the Nyāya, and in fact to all Indian philosophy. Withholding assent or doubting as a function of the limitless freedom of the will is not recognized as a possibility in the Nyāya, and therefore the argument (4) does not conform to any of the Nyāya rules.[30] And yet if anywhere it is here that we shall find the sources of a truly philosophical doubt.

With a view to looking closer into the nature of this argument let us ask what is meant by the two expressions 'withholding one's assent' and 'whatever is doubtful'?

Withholding one's assent means a deliberate, reflective decision not to believe, to suspend or neutralize one's belief, to 'bracket' it as Husserl would say. The motive for doing this—with Descartes, and also with Husserl—is the reflective one of finding a secure basis for human knowledge, a radical foundation, a first principle for the sciences. The Nyāya is operating with a strictly causal-deterministic conception, and within such a framework a doubt could occur only when there are necessary and sufficient conditions for it. The Naiyāyika might seek to include this reflective doubt within his own deterministic framework by tracing it to the factor of *icchā* or desire which is recognized by him to overpower others. But I wonder if this would help us to overcome the great difference that subsists between the two conceptions, which may perhaps be brought to light in still another way.

Withholding one's assent to a belief does not exclude making practical use of that belief. Descartes and Husserl, just when they ask us to doubt, or to practise the *époche*, do not suggest that that would mean giving up and a reorientation of our practical behaviour, of our *Lebenswelt* based precisely on those beliefs. On the contrary, Descartes writes:

'...we ought not meanwhile to make use of doubt in the conduct of life'. (The Principles of Philosophy, Part I. III.) And Husserl says the same of his phenomenological *époche*: the *époche* will not affect the daily course of practical life; it will only suspend theoretical judgement about the 'being' of the world.

What is excluded is the possibility of making any theoretical use of the beliefs concerned. I wonder if the Naiyāyika would approve of this attitude. For him, though ascertainment of the truth of a belief (*prāmāṇyagraha*) is not necessary for the appropriate practical behaviour, yet non-apprehension of its falsity is certainly a necessary condition.[31] Now, on the Nyāya analysis, doubt in the truth of a knowledge has the form:

K [{this knowledge} (truth). {This knowledge} (falsity)]. In so far as this doubt has falsity as one of its *prakāras*, the doubt is an apprehension of falsity in the belief and therefore on the Nyāya rules would serve as a *pratibandhaka* or hindrance to the appropriate practical behaviour. Normal practical behaviour would therefore be impeded by a universal scepticism. Descartes and Husserl do not apprehend this possibility but on the other hand assure us that

their doubt would leave the practical *Lebenswelt* untouched. There must then subsist *a radical difference* between the two doubts. They must then be not merely different kinds of doubts, but as doubts different.

The same radical difference comes to light if we examine what Descartes means by 'whatever is doubtful'. In one meaning of it, a thing is doubtful if it is in fact an object of doubt. But, for one thing, this is not all that is there in the ordinary meaning of that expression; and, for another, if to be doubtful meant to be in fact an object of doubt, then Descartes' decision to withhold assent from what is doubtful would be trivial; he would then be asking us to doubt what is being doubted, which would be utterly pointless. To be doubtful then means to be a possible object of a doubt. Now on the Nyāya theory nothing possesses any property or properties which make it liable to be doubted. Nothing by itself, i.e. by virtue of any of its own properties, is doubtful. Everything at the same time is a possible object of a valid knowledge, i.e. a *prameya*. Suitable *epistemic* conditions may however produce in a person doubt about anything. For Descartes, and for the entire tradition of Western philosophy, there is an important sense in which a thing may meaningfully be called doubtful. This is the sense that the thing could have been otherwise, that its contradictory is possible, or that it is, though a fact, a contingent one. If there is any p of which it holds good that both p and not-p are possible then it is doubtful. It is not necessary. It is, as Descartes says, uncertain. From all such things we are entitled to withhold our assent.

It would be obvious that the Nyāya knows no such categorization of things or facts or propositions into contingent and necessary. It knows, as said before, no distinction between what is *in fact* true but might not have been and what is *necessarily* true, between the *a posteriori* and the *a priori*, or even between analytic and synthetic truths. Bare logical possibility or counterfactual conditionals do not interest it. It gives a logic of facts, and in this sense is extensional, avoiding modal concepts.[32] It would not therefore approve of a universal scepticism, based on the notion of logical possibility.

Should we then say that here is an overall limitation of the Nyāya logic, whose symptoms show themselves in all aspects of it far beyond the narrow subject matter of the present paper? Perhaps it is so. It may also well be the case that doubt (or *saṁśaya*) in one

sense is exactly what the Nyāya means by it, and for it the Nyāya logic is well adapted. At the same time, philosophical doubt, doubt in the reflective level, falls beyond its scope. And the two doubts, it may well be, are not only different kinds of doubts but are as doubts different. One and the same logic cannot do justice to both. Descartes may be said to have erred on the opposite side, when he sought to extend the logic of ordinary doubt to philosophical doubt, which is the same as using arguments (1)-(3) to justify the latter.

NOTES

1. Vātsāyana for example defines Nyāya as *Pratyakṣgamāśritamanumānam* (Bhāṣya on *Nyāya Sūtra* 1.1.1).
2. What is more, the Nyāya goes to the extent of holding that a formally invalid inference is even psychologically impossible, the socalled *hetvābhāsas* being, not errors in inference, but conditions which render an inference psychologically as well as logically impossible.
3. Memory also is *apramā*, but not in the sense in which doubt or error is so.
4. For a more detailed account of this and the allied concepts see Mohanty, *Gangeśa's Theory of Truth*, Santiniketan, 1966 (Delhi, 1989), Introduction. See also Ingalls, *Materials for the Study of Navya Nyāya Logic*, Harvard, 1951.
5. Further elaboration of these concepts, however necessary, would take us beyond the scope of the present essay. See reference given under footnote 4. Be it noted here, to avoid any further misunderstanding, that the epistemic distinction between '*viśeṣyata*' and '*prakāratā*' does not correspond to the ontological distinction between substance and attribute. Nor is it the same as the logical distinction between 'subject ('*uddeśya*') and 'perdicate' ('*vidheya*').
6. '*tadabhāvāprakārakam tatprakārakamjñānam*' (Muktāvali on Kārikā 129).
7. '*Vākārathaśca virodha*', '*Kiraṇāvaliprakāśaḥ (Guṇa)*, The Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana texts Series, p. 135.
8. *Siddhāntamuktāvalī* with *Dinakarī* and *Rāmarudrī*.
9. Ibid., p. 480.
10. Chowkhamba ed., p. 414.
11. Loc. cit., p. 138.
12. Hence Gadādhara's rather forbidding definition: '*svāvacchinnaprati-*

vadhyatānirūpitaprativandhakatva-svasamānādhikaraṇyobhayasambandhena viṣayatāviśiṣṭaviṣayatāśālijñānam saṁśayapadārthaḥ'. (Prāmānyavāda Gādādharī).

13. '*Viruddhobhayāropasāmagridvayasamājādubhyāropa eka eva bhavati sa eva saṁśayaḥ*' (*Prāmāṇyavāda*, Darbhanga edition, p. 91).
14. Ibid., p. 92.
15. Vardhamana, *Kiraṇāvaliguṇaprakāśa*, p. 130.
16. Vardhamana, '*Na ca jijñāsājankam jñānam samśayaḥ upekṣaṇīyasamśayāvyāpteḥ*' ibid., p. 183).
17. '*Dharmijñānam ca saṁśayahetuḥ, anyathā saṁśaye dharminiyamaḥ kotyutkatatvam ca na syāt*' (loc. cit., p. 92).
18. It may be mentioned that both the factors (a) (ii) and (b) are implied in Gotama's sûtra where doubt is characterised as being *viśeṣāpekṣa*, which may mean either *viśeṣādarśana* (*apekṣā=adarśana*) or *viśeṣasmṛtyapekṣa* corresponding to the above two factors respectively. There is a third possible interpretation according to which this expression means 'the desire to apprehend the specific characters' (*apekṣā=ākānkṣā* or desire); but we cannot include such desire amongst the necessary preconditions of doubt *qua* doubt. There may be doubts even when such desire is absent. Moreover, often the desire to ascertain is a consequence rather than a cause of doubt.
19. See *Vātsāyana Bhāṣya* on *Nyāya Sûtra* 2.1.6.
20. See Phanibhusan Tarkabagish on sûtra 2.1.6. (*Nyāyadarśana* Vol. II).
21. '*Śabdavyāptijñānādinām niścayamātrajanakatvasvabhāvāt*'.
22. See for example *Dinakari* on *Siddhāntamuktāvali* on *kārikā* 180.
23. See ingalls, loc. cit. for the relation of pervasion or *vyāpti*.
24. Descartes, *The Principles of Philosophy* (Everyman ed.), p. 166.
25. Ibid., p. 166.
26. Descartes, *Meditations* (Everyman ed.), p. 81.
27. *The Principles of Philosophy*, p. 166.
28. Ibid., p. 166.
29. *Meditations* (Everyman's ed.), p. 81.
30. The only rule which bears a certain semblance to the Cartesian case under consideration is the Nyāya rule that the factor of desire (*icchā*) overpowers any other set of factors tending to produce a contrary result.
31. Gangeśa, *Prāmāṇyavāda*.
32. It should be remembered however that the Nyāya logic is not extensional in the sense that it knows no quantification. But that is an altogether different sense of extensionality.

PART II
Humanity, Social Ethics, and Understanding Religion

11
Sri Aurobindo on Language

Sri Aurobindo's thoughts on the nature of language are contained in his writings on the Vedas and in the posthumous essay 'The Origins of Aryan Speech'.[1] There are also valuable remarks scattered through out *The Future Poetry*.[2] One should consult his translations of the *Upaniṣads* as well as *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*.[3] In this brief essay I wish to draw attention to some of the more significant aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thoughts in this area.

There are two contexts in which Sri Aurobindo takes up his reflections on the nature of language. First, of course, there is his interest in finding the true significance of the Vedic hymns. The second, he tells us,[4] was his attempt to trace out the relations between Sanskrit and Tamil, an interest which must have developed after he settled down in Pondicherry and started learning Tamil.

In his Vedic studies, he was thoroughly dissatisfied with both the classical Indian point of view represented ably in Sāyaṇa's commentary and the point of view of European Indologists. Both Sāyaṇa and the European Indologists agree in principle: namely, that the Vedic hymns are marked by a sort of naturalistic polytheism and by a pervasive ritualistic religion. Where the modern European scholars have differed from Sāyaṇa concerns the details, but in broad principles they have followed Sāyaṇa. *Agni* means first of all fire, and then the fire-god; *Sūrya* is the sun, and then the sun-god; *Uṣas* is the dawn which is then deified. The same applies to *Mitra, Varuṇa, Vṛtra, Indra* and all the others. The naturalistic interpretation becomes more difficult in the case of the more abstract deities like *Aditi, Viśvakarma, Hiraṇyagarbha* or such a goddess as *Śraddhā*. Sri Aurobindo rejects the naturalistic, and also consequently, ritualistic interpretation on several grounds. In the first place, he thinks—and in this he certainly raises a question of the utmost difficulty—that this

interpretation creates a gap between the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads* that is impossible to account for. How is it that such a naive naturalistic religion could so quickly give rise to a deeply spiritualistic conception of man and his universe? The continuity between the two, which is recognized by the tradition, becomes an inexplicable mystery. Secondly, it is also difficult to explain why if the Vedic religion was what it is made out to be, the tradition accorded to the *Vedas* the status that it did. That status cannot be due to the fact that they provide the origins of later thought, for the mere origin is what we leave behind, however much we may preserve it in memory. That the tradition cherished it as containing not mere anticipations but also the truths of later thought has to be accounted for, when the *Upaniṣads* surely abandoned the apparently polytheistic and ritualistic religion of the hymns. Sri Aurobindo also questions the fundamental assumption on which much of western Vedic scholarship, at least in its beginning, was based: the thought namely that the Vedic literature bears evidence to one of the earliest, and therefore primitive and naive workings of the human mind, so that what we are to expect in the hymns is nothing deep and profound but naive and simplistic, unsystematic and incoherent thoughts reflecting a natural tendency of the primitive man to personify natural phenomena and a pre-scientific belief in the magical efficacy of charted words and duly performed rituals to protect them from the wrath of natural powers before whom they felt helpless and to acquire for them their favours. Sri Aurobindo rightly questions this assumption about the nature of the early mind, not merely in India but anywhere else in the world.

In all these points, Sri Aurobindo's dissatisfaction with the traditional as well as the western Indologist's way of understanding the *Vedas* is well founded. I will particularly refer to the last-mentioned ground: it is now an established result of modern ethnology that myths are not imaginative fancies of a primitive, naive and unsophisticated mind, nor are they primitive stages of scientific thinking, a sort of proto-science that is far outgrown with the rise of scientific thinking. Lévi-Strauss has shown that the myths are conceptual structures, intellectually well-organized, with an internal coherence and logic of their own, and that they are not primitive *stages* of man's efforts to understand nature but form a system that is parallel to modern sciences.[5] I do not think that Lévi-Strauss' almost

mathematical formalism is adequate to understand myths, but there is no doubt that we cannot return any more to that simplistic manner of understanding myths. The Vedic mind was not simple, childlike, fanciful and imaginative—not any more than ours is today. We need some other hypothesis to operate with.

Just as contemporary ethnological thinking is against the mode of Vedic interpretation that Sri Aurobindo wants to reject, so also we may look to contemporary phenomenology of religion for support. I will only very briefly refer to Mircia Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion*[6] in which Eliade undertakes a detailed study and interpretation of primitive religious symbolism. His purpose is to bring out the distinctively unique element of religiousness in them, what he calls the element of the sacred, which all attempts to study religious symbolism by means of linguistic, sociology, ethnology, psychology or economics tend to miss. In fact, he comes to look upon apparently very different kinds of phenomena—rites, myths, cosmogonies, magical practices, gods—as symbols of the sacred 'in the mental world of those who believed in it',[7] quite irrespective of the ontological value to be accorded to such belief. Such a symbol which manifests the sacred, each such piece of evidence which expresses some one modality of the sacred, is called by Eliade a 'hierophany'.[8] Study of such hierophanies shows, according to Eliade, that symbols 'identify, assimilate, and unify diverse levels and realities that are to all appearances incompatible'.[9]This is made possible by the fact that a symbol, in this sense, at once signifies many different levels of meanings, points to many different levels of reality (e.g. material, cosmological, social, psychological and spiritual).[10]

II

The problem of interpreting the *Vedas* is really a problem in hermeneutics. How to go about interpreting an ancient text from which we are far removed not merely in time but also in historical experience and in modes of thought? How are we to avoid that inevitable temptation to impose upon that ancient text our own modes of thinking, our favoured categories? Is there any way of transporting ourselves to the mode of thinking of that mind which lies behind the text? We shall return to this question later in this essay.

For the present, let us return to the second of the two contexts in which Sri Aurobindo's thoughts on language take shape. This second impetus came from his efforts to find the relationship between Tamil and Sanskrit. He rejects the anthropological theory that the *Vedas* bear evidence to the conflict between the Āryan conquerors and the original Dravidian inhabitants of the land. He also rejects the linguistic theory which sets Tamil apart as a Dravidian language which does not have its genesis in Sanskrit. He comes to question the grounds on which the classification of language families is generally carried out (e.g. possession of a large body of common terms, which proves 'nothing more than contact or cohabitation'[11]). On the contrary, he tries to show that although latin *pater*, Greek *patêr* and Sanskrit *pitar* form a family to which Tamil *appā* does not belong, yet Tamil *appā* is the reverse of the Sanskrit *apatyam* so that both may well have their origin from the Sanskrit root '*ap*' meaning to produce or create. Just as Tamil, *ammā* does not seem to belong to the well known family: *mêter, māter, mātar*, it may yet be closely related to the high Sanskrit *ambā*. As a philologist, thus, his interest seems to have been to find out the missing links between Tamil and Sanskrit, whereby he thought he could recreate the embryology of what he calls the Aryan speech. Be it noted that his use of 'Āryan' is wide enough to include what the European linguists have called Dravidian.

There are thus elements in Sri Aurobindo's studies on language whose value can be judged by comparative philologists. But since he wants to challenge some of the basic hypotheses of modern philologists, his thesis can be examined with fairness only by not taking those very hypotheses for granted. That may be both an exciting and fruitful task, to which I would like to draw the attention of competent Indian scholars in the field. Since I am not a philologist, I do not feel competent to pursue that line of investigation.

What I want to do, in this essay, is to briefly expound and give some of my own thoughts on, two other most important contributions of Sri Aurobindo: first, his specific principle of Vedic interpretation, and secondly, his theory of the origin of language. The two in fact happen to be closely related in his mind.

As to the former:

'The hypothesis on which I shall conduct my own enquiry is that the *Vedas* has a double aspect and that the two, though closely

related, must be kept apart. The *ṛṣis* arranged the substance of their thought in a system of parallelism by which the same deities were at once internal and external Powers of universal Nature, and they managed its expression through a system of double values by which the same language served for their worship in both aspects. But the psychological sense predominates and is more pervading, close-knit and coherent than the physical.'[12]

The following passage may serve as a brief illustration of how this interpretation has to be carried out:

'Thus *Agni* outwardly is the physical principle of fire, but inwardly the god of the psychic Godward flame, force, will, *Tapas; Sūrya* outwardly the solar light, inwardly the god of the illuminating revelatory Knowledge; *Soma* outwardly the moon and the *soma* wine or necatrous moon-plant, inwardly the god of the spiritual ecstacy, *Ānanda.*'[13]

As to the question, why did the authors of the hymns use this device of concealing their true meaning, Sri Aurobindo makes use of the hypothesis that in ancient mystic cults mystic knowledge was regarded as sacred and so was communicated to the initiates alone. The hymns therefore were so written that they would have one sort of appeal to the layman and another to the initiate. Thus writes Sri Aurobindo:

'Hence they favoured the existence of an outer worship, effective but imperfect, for the profane, an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language in words and images which had, equally a spiritual sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the mass or ordinary worshippers.'[14]

But in doing this, the authors of the *Vedas* were making use of a certain plasticity that characterized not only Vedic Sanskrit but all ancient languages, if Sri Aurobindo's theory of the origin of language be true. We have to bear in mind that the essay 'The Origins of Āryan Speech' is only a fragment of what was intended to be a much larger work. The fragment by itself does not develop a theory of the origin of language *as such.* The really valuable element in this essay, from the point of view of philosophy of language, then is the contrast that is drawn between ancient languages and modern languages. In the first place, modern speech is 'largely a fixed and almost artificial form, not precisely a fossil, but an organism proceeding towards arrest and fossilisation'.[15] What Sri Aurobindo

means is that in modern languages a word and its significance are bound by mere convention, whereas in ancient languages the words still carried the significance of their roots which succeeded in establishing a closer relation between sense and sound. Secondly, modern speech is characterized by fixed parts of speech, whereas in ancient tongues the same word could do the work of a noun, adjective, verb and adverb. The word *cit*, for example, may equally well mean—in Vedic Sanskrit—to know, knowing, knower, knowledge and knowingly. It is of course well known that the principle 'one word—one meaning', if at all it even holds good, is true of modern languages in a far greater degree than of the ancient ones where each word had different meanings and each meaning could be expressed by many different words.

Now ever since the discovery of Sanskrit, western linguists have been debating the question, if ever there was a pure root language, and today the consensus seems to be against such a hypothesis. However, what Sri Aurobindo means by the 'root state' of a language[16] is perhaps not a language consisting primarily of roots, but one in which the root-meanings are very much predominant. Sanskrit, itself, compared to many other Indo-European languages, in an example of this. Structurally, one can analyse any speech to its simplest, discernible *sound* elements, the phonemes (which by themselves are meaningless) and then reconstruct the complex sounds out of them. Similarly, one can analyse the complex *meanings* of formed words to the roots which signify a basic action, movement or function. In ancient speech, this root significance was still on the surface, and since the roots had different meanings, a whole family of them, words carried around them a complex network of meanings. But, as should be evident, there would seem to be a limit in this analysis. One can say that *vṛka* means 'wolf' because the root *vṛc* signified 'tearing down', *dalmi* means 'Indra's thunderbolt' because *dal* meant to 'split' or 'crush'. But can we take another step backwards and ask, why did *vṛc* mean 'tearing down' and *dal* mean 'to split or crush'? Sri Aurobindo raises this question without giving any decisive answer. I do not see how one can come up with any satisfying answer in most cases—excepting cases where the root or the word is 'echoic' ('cuckoo') or where the word-sound tends to reproduce the sound of some movement (e.g. 'splash' in English, *nirjhara* in Sanskrit). What I am trying to say is that there seems to be a limit

beyond which sound and sense, in most cases, cannot be brought to a *non*-conventional relation. Sri Aurobindo however seems to think[17] that the original association between sense and sound was not conventional but 'natural, governed by simple and definite psychological laws'. If this is so, then—one cannot but wonder—how is it that even in the most ancient tongues the same sense came to be connected with different sounds? Sri Aurobindo makes two assertions about this embryonic state of language, both of which may be acceptable: that in their beginnings, language-sounds 'were rather the vocal equivalents of certain general sensations and emotion-values', and further that 'in the first state of language the world is as living or even a more living force than its idea', so that the 'sound determines sense'. The former assertion may quite well be true of a large class of significant sounds, but of many others it is open to doubt. The latter, in a very important sense, may be true—without entailing the consequence that even, excepting the sorts of cases mentioned above—the relation between sound and sense was non-conventional. The truth of the statement that in its embryonic state, the sounds of a language 'determine sense' but not *vice versa* seems to me to lie precisely in what has already been pointed out: namely, that in ancient speech, the root-meanings are on the surface so that the root sounds determine the senses of the formed words. Therefore admitting that ultimately the relation between sound and sense is conventional, one may nevertheless recognize that a word which for the modern speaker relates to its signification entirely by convention, had a closer relation, through the predominance of its root meaning, for the consciousness of the user of the same word in ancient times. From a common 'mother-root', as is well known to the philologists, there arise, what Sri Aurobindo calls 'common word-families', 'common word-clans', 'kindred word-nations' (or languages). It requires a long period of development to arrive at even a *nearly* realized principle of one word-one meaning in the modern languages.

By the 'multi-significance of roots'[18] and so of the formed words as well, Sri Aurobindo means something much more radical and interesting than that words may be used symbolically, allegorically or metaphorically, or that apart from its primary meaning there may be a secondary meaning in use (*lakṣaṇā*) or even a poetic meaning. The radical thesis he is advocating is that words of ancient

speech, by virtue of their roots, had several primary meanings related to each other by sort of 'family resemblance' so that the word was not simply equivocal or ambiguous. But it rather signified, by virtue of the plasticity of its root, several interconnected meanings. Thus to take his example, the word *Agni* of Vedic speech meant both 'fire' and 'that which purifies' amongst others. As we have seen, Sri Aurobindo's Vedic interpretation rests upon this thesis.

There is also another aspect of the development of language to which Sri Aurobindo draws attention. In its early stage, language has at its disposal 'a remarkably small stock of ideas' which are 'the most general notions possible and generally the most concrete, such as light, motion, touch, substance, extension, force, speed etc'. From this small stock, there arises gradually a process of differentiation and precision. 'The progression', he writes 'is from the general to the particular, from the vague to the precise, from the physical to the mental, from the concrete to the abstract.'[19] Now there is certainly much truth in this last remark, but I would like to modify it considerably. As some of my subsequent remarks will show, I do not think that we can ascribe to any language users physical concepts without also ascribing to them, by contrast, the mental concept. For, the idea of the physical *quâ* physical is defined by way of separating it off from the mental. Now, it seems to me a very plausible view that the ideas at the disposal of the early man were vague, and their vagueness comprehended entire regions of discourse without partitioning them off into distinct areas. The progression from vague ideas to precise ideas has been notably worked out in recent times by Husserl in his *Crisis*. But the opposition vague-precise does not coincide with that between physical and mental though it does to a large measure coincide with that between concrete and abstract. Abstraction required precision, qualitative and quantitative. The stock of ideas at the disposal of the early mind were vague, but coherent, were prior to the distinction between the physical and the mental, and were concrete.

III

Let us now return to the principle of Vedic interpretation suggested by Sri Aurobindo. There is one objection to this principle, raised by Radhakrishnan,[20] which I would set aside at the very outset.

Radhakrishnan argues that Sri Aurobindo's interpretation goes against 'what is known of the general nature of human development', for it attributes to the primitive mind perceptions and abilities which could only be results of further growth. To me this argument is untenable. For, in the first place, admitting the general principle of evolution, the exact order, direction and nature of the evolution of the human mind can be fixed only *after* we know what the ancients experienced and thought rather than *vice versa*. In the second place, I tend to agree with Eliade that 'almost all the religious attitudes man has, he has had from the most primitive times'.[21] Besides, the evolution, growth and development of the human mind as a whole is not from naivity to sophistication (the idea of the primitive man as naive is only a romantic myth), but from one sort of sophistication to another; not from lack of coherence to coherence ,[22] but from one sort of coherence to another. In other words, the development is not just linear but of an enormously complex pattern.

Against a 'naturalistic' interpretation of the ancient texts, as of any ancient document with its records of myths, rites and symbolism, I would like to raise the following fundamental objection. Such an interpretation, according to which the ancient mind personifies and deifies what are natural forces or phenomena, is conceived from the point of view of the modern mentality. The so-called 'natural' forces or phenomena (sun, moon, fire, water) are first conceived as 'natural' in accordance with a concept of 'mere nature' that is only a later achievement of the human mind—an achievement which is such that it already implies a separation from its 'correlate', the spirit or the mental. It is only when such an absolute separation has been achieved and conceptually fixed, that one can speak of attributing to a natural entity the properties of spirit. But if—as seems to be the case—the Cartesian dualism was not the conceptual framework of the ancient minds, if nothing was for them merely natural, then it is misconceived and inappropriate to characterize their mode of thinking as a personification of natural phenomena. In fact, it would seem that for them what we call nature was already replete with spirit. To call their religion naturalistic is to try to understand, and then to underrate it in the light of our Cartesian framework. (The Cartesian framework characterizes not only modern western thought, but also a large segment of classical Indian thought.) It is only by returning to their life-world that the true operation of

ancient thinking (with its own peculiar forms of objectification) can be described.

However, may it not be that the same objection also holds good against Sri Aurobindo's approach? When Sri Aurobindo says that the Vedic words have a double meaning—a physical and a psychological and that the authors intended both the sets of meanings but for different sorts of audience, isn't he also appealing to the same Cartesian dualism—though combining the two sorts of signification in the unity of a word? I think, there is a point in this objection. The word *Agni*, Sri Aurobindo tells us, mean both physical fire and psychic flame of purified will. If they are two distinct meanings—one physical and the other psychological—we are certainly back with the dualism which, it seems to me, should be overcome if we are to get at the ancient mind. It is perhaps more correct to say that physical fire had not yet acquired the significance of pure physicality, for this latter significance came to be constituted only after all spiritual and symbolic significance had been denuded out of it. If that is so, then *Agni* could have meant, not both physical fire *and* the inner purified will, but—in a curiously ambiguous manner—the two in their non-distinction. The 'merely physical' being a concept that was constituted later, the outer fire and the inner spiritual power were not distinguished as belonging to two distinct domains. The outer was a transparent symbol of the inner, the inner visible through the outer. The two formed one domain.

If this is so, we may retain the substance of Sri Aurobindo's Vedic interpretation, recognize the symbolic nature of Vedic speech, myths and rites, but discard the hypothesis that there was a deliberate effort on the part of the authors of the hymns to convey two distinct meanings—one for the initiates and the other for the laymen. The linguistic doctrine of the multiple significance of the roots is one that we accept, but this multiple significance only means that the different possible significations still belonged to one 'family', one ambiguous region within which determinate meanings could come into being—but not that the 'purely physical' and the 'purely psychological' meanings had as such emerged. It is to this region of ambiguity, and not to a deliberate equivocation, that we shall trace the nature of Vedic speech. The first attempt at separating the physical from the psychic is to be found then in the *Upaniṣads*.

IV

I may now sum up the points where I agree with Sri Aurobindo's views and the points where I have differed from them. I have found his views about the multiple meanings of the words, and the consequent plasticity of ancient speech, as contrasted with modern languages, extremely important and useful. I have tried to give sense to his emphasis on the root meanings, at the same time denying that there ever was root language. What I have not accepted is his view that we can go back to a point, in the embryology of language, where the relation between sense and sound is natural and non-conventional (excepting a few select groups of cases). I have accepted his view that the progress of language is also the progress from vague ideas to precise ideas, from concrete to the abstract. But I have not accepted that it is also a progress from the physical to the mental ideas.

There is no question about the importance of Sri Aurobindo's Vedic hermeneutics. It is possibly the most significant attempt in modern times to interpret this record of ancient thought. In principle, I have accepted the thesis that Vedic words always carried a multi-layered significance. What seems to me to be not more than an interesting conjecture is that their authors should have used this plasticity deliberately to keep their inner significance secret. It seems to me rather that all the different dimensions of significance belong to the texts in a rather ambiguous unity, such that it would be a matter of different emphasis whether one today fixes upon the one or the other. But the fundamental unity of the concrete and the abstract, the physical and the mental, the inner and the outer was never lost sight of, just because these distinctions had not yet emerged in their present sharpness and antagonism. This also shows that interpretation of an ancient text is not a matter of mere linguistics, philology and grammar, but is inseparable from a phenomenology of religion.

NOTES

1. Both contained in the volume *On the Vedu*, Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1964.
2. In Collected Works of Sri Auribindo, Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, Pondicherry, 1971, Vol. 9.
3. Ibid., Vol. 11.
4. *On the Veda*, pp. 39–41.
5. e.g. his *The Savage Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1966.
6. Mircia Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, E. Tr. by Rosemary Sheed, Meridian Books, 1963.
7. Ibid., p. 10.
8. Ibid., p. 10.
9. Ibid., p. 455.
10. Ibid., p. 450 ff.
11. *On the Veda*, p. 570.
12. *On the Veda*, pp. 34–5.
13. *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, in: *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 461–7.
14. *On the Veda*, p. 6.
15. *On the Veda*, p. 576.
16. *On the Veda*, p. 589.
17. *On the Veda*, pp. 54–5.
18. Ibid., p. 33.
19. Ibid., p. 56.
20. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 70.
21. Eliade, *loc. cit.*, p. 463.
22. Thus Sri Aurobindo: 'We must recognise that the old religions were organic systems founded on ideas which were at least as coherent as those which constitute our modern systems of belief.' (*On the Veda*, p. 30). Referring to ancient 'magical' thought, Lévi-Strauss writes: 'it is in a sense complete in itself, and as finished and coherent in its immateriality as the substantial being which it precedes... It forms a well-articulated system, and in this respect independent of that other system which constitutes science...' (*The Savage Mind*, p. 13).

12
Sri Aurobindo on the Ideal Social Order

In *The Human Cycle*, Sri Aurobindo has characterized the modern age as the Subjective Age. This characterization is at once apparently paradoxical and yet highly profound. It is apparently paradoxical for the reason that it is usual to consider our age as materialistic and pragmatic, scientific and technological in character. It is further usual to contrast this age with the Middle Ages in Europe and the Puranic Ages in India, and to mourn over what is gone. It requires however both insight and courage to record the progress that has been made over the past, to sense the development of spirit underlying the outer achievements to determine the historical context of this development, to outline the tendencies involved in it, and lastly, to exhibit the prospects of future progress. Sri Aurobindo's *The Human Cycle* fulfils this task incomparably well.

I

The subjective age is a development out of the age of individualism and cannot be understood without reference to its predecessor. The age of individualism itself is a revolt against the age of convention. When the original *types* became stereotyped by being deprived of their inner ideas, when conventions—rigid and lifeless—came to rule the life of the individual and the society, when reason was subordinated to dogma and living experience was suspected by the Church,—there arose inevitably a revolt. Individualism thus was at first negative in character. It came as a revolt of critical reason against faith and dogma. But unqualified individualism would lead only to chaos. If each individual claimed to be an infallible source of illumination and authority, there would be relativism in truth and anarchism in society. The two problems therefore which individualism

was faced with were: how to arrive at a universal standard of truth? and, how to get at a satisfactory principle of social order? Individualism in Europe found its answer to both these questions in science. Science satisfied the critical reason of the individual without leaving room for conflict of personal opinions and yet without working as an authority to be blindly submitted to. On the other hand, starting from a 'a crude primitive perception of natural right and justice' individualism ended up in a 'rigid economic or governmental socialism'. Thus science and socialism provided the last answers to the twin problem with which individualism had begun.

And yet it is interesting to see that in both the original aim of individualism stands frustrated. Socialism claimed to determine the entire life of the individual from birth to death. Science curiously enough resolved the individual to the status of an appearance of universal laws. Thus the individual in his attempt to discover himself ends up with the universal and the collectivity which *swallows* him up. Individualism defeats itself, but not without having left behind contributions of permanent value for human history. Sri Aurobindo singles out two such contributions which 'cannot be entirely eliminated by any temporary reaction.' These are: first, the democratic conception of the right of all individuals to the full development of their capacities; and secondly, the realization, however inadequate, that the individual is not merely a unit of society but is a being with his own destiny, his own truth and law of existence.

The age of individualism has firmly established the former conception. The second it has imperfectly sensed. It is the age of subjectivism which is groping towards a fuller apprehension of this truth.

The failure in individualism has led towards self-questioning on the part of the individual. *Who* precisely is the individual who had revolted against authority and had sought to establish himself in its place? The tragic experience of the age of individualism and rationalism has made it only too clear that the individual is not what the age of individualism and reason had taken him to be. The age of individualism has experimented with two conceptions of the individual: the vital individual and the rational individual. The age of subjectivism is attempting to go deeper and to catch a glimpse of the true nature of the individual and to found the principle of social order on that knowledge.

II

If we are to look for the signs of this new search for the 'soul', Sri Aurobindo would ask us to consider those fields where man's most intimate inquiries find their expression. These fields are literature, the arts and philosophy. If there is any single common characteristic of these fields of human activity it is nothing else than a growing subjectivism.

'The art, music and literature of the world, always a sure index of the vital tendencies of the age, have also undergone a profound revolution in the direction of an ever-deepening subjectivism. The great objective art and literature of the past no longer commands the mind of the new age.... Art and literature seem definitely to have taken a turn towards a subjective search into what may be called the hidden inside of things and away from the rational and objective canon or nature.'[1]

This turn began, according to Sri Aurobindo, with the vitalistic movements of the last century, particularly with Nietzsche. Nietzsche's conception of Will-to-Power as the root of human existence, Bergson's conception of *élan vital* and of an intuitive awareness, Dostoyevsky's deeply penetrating psychological novels are notable amongst those that laid the foundation of this new awareness. But our age has not stopped with this vitalistic self-awareness of the first decades of this century. We have gone ahead.

'The first tendency was, as in thought so in literature, an increasing psychological vitalism which sought to represent penetratingly the most subtle psychological impulses and tendencies of man as they started to the surface in his emotional, aesthetic and vitalistic cravings and activities.... But to this movement, which reached its highest creative power in Russia, there succeeded a turn towards a more truly psychological art, music and literature, mental, intuitional, psychic rather than vitalistic, departing in fact from a superficial vitalism as much as its predecessors departed from the objective mind of the past.'[2]

As is well known, the new psychologies of Freud and Jung have helped this transition from a vitalistic self-awareness towards a deeper psychological awareness. The new psychology revealed hitherto unscaled depths of the human mind and brought to light the intriguing truth that our surface awareness is but a tiny part of

our entire psyche, being determined in its actions and behaviour by the large uncharted realms labelled as the Unconscious. The new psychology, we may say now, has overcome its first obsession with the libido and has arrived at a more integral conception of the human mind in the works of C.G. Jung. There is now a clearer awareness, established by the scientific method and confirmed by its application to cases of medical therapy, of the role which the superconscious—as contrasted with the unconscious—plays in human affairs.

In Philosophy, the age of subjectivism began earlier, in Descartes. But its interest in the subject, psychological at first (in the philosophies of the empiricists), developed into the conception of a rational subject (in German idealism). This latter conception of a universal rational subject of course served as a corrective to the excessive individualism of the preceding era, but it also found an ally in the scientific optimism of its age: Kant believed the natural sciences to be the only source of valid knowledge. In this alliance of rationalistic subjectivism—which may as well be called rationalistic objectivism—and science, the individuality of the individual was again swallowed up. Reaction against German idealism which reached its high water-mark in Hegel set in. The most valuable form of this reaction came through Nietzsche on the one hand and Kierkegaard on the other hand: the influences of both combined to usher in the existentialist movement which is characterized by an uncompromising sincerity in delving into the depths of individual existence without letting universal laws—scientific, psychological or biological—swallow up that existence.

In this connection we may also mention the modern branch of study known as philosophical anthropology built up by the researches of such investigators as Martin Heidegger, Martin Buber, Helmuth Plessner, Max Scheler, Arnold Gehlen, etc. Through these researches a new awareness of the nature of human existence is coming into being,—an awareness that is deeper, more comprehensive than the rationalistic philosophy of the early ages and yet not naturalistic like the scientific self-consciousness of the preceding century.

No doubt, this is all a mere groping towards a fuller apprehension of the nature of the individual. Each such movement of modern thought has its own one-sidedness. An integral philosophy of man should take into consideration all these data. It is only such an

integral conception of man that can serve as the basis for the ideal social order of the future.

III

'...there is a false as well as a true subjectivism and the errors to which the subjective trend may be liable are as great as its possibilities and may well lead to capital disaster. This distinction must be clearly grasped if the road of this stage of social evolution is to be made safe for the human race.'[3]

The best example of a false subjectivism is to be found in the aberrations that the idea of 'nation-soul' has suffered from in modern history. The group-consciousness, according to Sri Aurobindo's analysis, was at first objective,—centering around the geographical and political conception of the nation. Those who had an eye for the subjective factor in group-life saw however only a few individuals belonging to the group, so that the history of the group ornation came to be nothing other than a 'mass of biographies'. This however was only a superficial consciousness, applying 'to the imperfectly self-conscious period of national development'. There is besides a vague sense of group-subjectivity, a consciousness of 'national idiosyncracies, habits, prejudices, marked mental tendencies, etc.' But this according to Sri Aurobindo is nothing other than 'an objective sense of subjectivity'. A deeper awareness of group-subjectivity, of the 'nation-soul' is a recent phenomenon, more marked in nations objectively handicapped, politically subjugated and economically poor (Ireland, India). This awareness may be in some cases largely political and consequently superficial. But this fact that the nations are showing 'this tendency of self-finding' is 'one of the capital phenomenon of the tendencies of national and communal life at the present hour'.

Nowhere however are the aberrations of a false subjectivism better exemplified than in that false national self-consciousness which cast spells of horror in recent history. The dangers were not consequences of the idea of group-subjectivity which in itself is a sound principle, but of a false consciousness of that subjectivity. The history of Germany illustrates this tragedy: 'For more than a half-century Germany turned a deep eye of subjective introspection on herself and things and ideas in search of the truth of her own

being and of the world.... And something was done, something indeed powerful and enormous, but also in certain directions, not in all, misshapen and disconcerting. Unfortunately, those directions were precisely the very central lines on which to go wrong is to miss the goal.'[4]

It was the *vital ego* which was in the long run—in spite of Germany's great thinkers, musicians and poets—identified with the soul of the nation. And this error might quite possibly be due to the historical circumstance that the subjective age developed out of the individualistic so that individual egoism got transformed into national egoism.

In any case, with regard to group-subjectivity two considerations have to be borne in mind : the idea of 'nation-soul' must not be confused with national egoism, with the economic, political or military aspirations of the nation, or in fact with any expansionist motive. Secondly, the groups or even nations should not only try to 'find' themselves but also to be conscious of each other's souls and to appreciate each other subjectively and spiritually.

IV

The ideal line of social development requires a clear conception of the nature of subjectivity, both individual and collective, as well as a clear formulation of the various terms and relationships involved.

As to the nature of subjectivity, Sri Aurobindo advocates a parallelism between the individual and the group,—a procedure that is reminiscent of Plato.

First, the self is neither the body nor the vital ego nor the rational mind. Nor should we identify self with any one-sided expression of our mind, ethical or aesthetic. The true self is the spiritual individual.

Secondly, the individual (as well as the group) has also a body, is a living organism, has a mind, has ethical ideals and aesthetic emotions; but he is more than all this. Morphologically, his inner being exhibits roughly three strata : the infra-rational, the rational and the supra-rational. The infra-rational consists of bodily sensations, vital instincts and the 'unconscious' of modern psychology. The rational exhibits the traditional tripartite division into the intellectual, the ethical and the emotional. The supra-rational also is a complex structure, having its own inner stratifications. This complexity of the individual person (correspondingly of the group) must be borne

in mind. A clear conception of the inner relationships involved shall give us a practical direction. Rationalism sought in reason the guiding principle of human life, individual and collective. Reason however has proved its inability to control, guide and regulate the infra-rational. Not being itself an original power, standing and mediating as it does between two realms, the infra-rational and the supra-rational, reason fails to be the guiding principle of life. The infra-rational requires to be sublimated, and this is possible only with the aid of the supra-rational. Reason can, of course, serve a very useful purpose here. Only, it cannot be the sole master of the situation.

Thirdly, the individual 'is not only himself, but is in solidarity with all of his kind'.[5] An ideal order of social development must recognize the mutual interdependence—an interdependence which does not annul the autonomy of each—of three terms : the individual, the community and humanity. Each of these terms has its own distinctive mode of self-consciousness, its own law and line of development. But at the same time each must take into consideration the interest of the other. The group-self cannot regard the individual as a mere cell of its body, as a mere cog in its machine. There is of course a line of development which each society has to follow in accordance with its own 'soul'; similarly, humanity is marching ahead towards one distant goal. Consistent with this common goal of humanity, consistent with the line of development of each society, the individual has to follow his own genius, his own 'dharma'. While thus championing the cause of the individual on the one hand and of the humanity on the other, Sri Aurobindo is not oblivious of the role that the community or the group has to play :

'The individual has to live in humanity as well as humanity in the individual: but mankind is or has been too large an aggregate to make this mutuality a thing intimate and powerfully felt in the ordinary mind of the race, and even if humanity becomes a manageable unit of life, intermediate groups and aggregates must still exist for the purpose of mass-differentiation and the concentration and combination of varying tendencies in the total human aggregate.'[6]

This however does not justify the claim of community to usurp the place of humanity and to control the life of the individual.

'As the free development of individuals from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of the community, so the

free development of the community or the nation from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of mankind.'[7]

Fourthly, a true subjectivism must recognise not only the three terms discussed above but also another trinity : the individual, the universal and the transcendent. The individual self and the universal self are in this view two indispensable modes of the transcendent reality.

If these four considerations are borne in mind, we can lay the foundation of that true subjectivism on which the future order of social development depends.

V

When we have thus gained the philosophical insight required for determining the ideal order of social development, it may be now interesting to look back at the actual situation with man's experiments in social ordering. The present stage has not yet completely overcome the ideal of rationalism. Rationalism, as we have mentioned before, began with individualism. In the sphere of social polity, this took the form of individualistic democracy based on an over-emphasis on the idea of individual liberty. In practice, this ideal did not work. It proved conflicting with the realities of life. The ordinary man—and also the leader—is not a perfectly rational being. He is not able to form perfectly rational judgement. The infra-rational in him, his interests, prejudices, and impulses play a determining role in his judgements. Reason, except in exceptional cases, is used by him for justifying his interests, faiths and prejudices. Reason, instead of being used as a principle of harmony between individuals is used as a weapon for *competing* with others. The high ideal of individualistic democracy falls to the ground, though not without leaving behind acquisitions of permanent value for humanity.

The ideal of democratic individualism gave place to the ideal of democratic socialism. Socialism stressed the ideal of equality—not merely political but also economic and social. Competition was sought to be replaced by organised order and harmony. The interest of the individual was to be sacrificed for the interest of the community. Democratic socialism aimed at combining this socialistic ideal with a limited individual freedom. Out of this combination of the collectivist idea with the individualistic, it was hoped, would arise the

true rational conception of freedom of the individual. This hope however is today shattered. The two ideals refuse to be combined. Democratic socialism yielded room to collective totalitarianism, to complete one-sided victory for the collectivistic ideal. This means also the end of rationalism, the establishment of a collective mysticism, 'an inviolable body of doctrines with all denial or departure treated as a punishable heresy, a social cult enforced by the intolerant piety and enthusiasm of converted people.'[8] The individual with all aspects of his life and existence belongs entirely to the society. Individual egoism and reason is to be replaced by a collective egoism and a collective reason.

This fate of socialism is largely conditioned by its origin. It arose as a revolt against unbridled individual egoism. It seeks to subordinate the isolate ego to the greater group-ego. This is the element of truth in the collectivist ideal. It reminds the individual of a higher unity to which he belongs and 'the necessity of unifying his life with that of others'.[9] But this element of truth is neutralised, in fact overcome, by the collectivist attempt to eliminate all individual freedom.

The spirit of the individual is undauntable. The inherent absurdity as well as unworkability of the extreme collectivist idea will lead to a fresh revolt of the individual. Here Sri Aurobindo's remark is especially noteworthy :

'Afterwards, when again the individual asserts his freedom, as some day he must, he may have learned to do it on the basis of this unity and not on the basis of his separate egoistic life. *This may well be the intention of Nature* in human society in its movement towards a collectivist principle of social living.'[10]

If collectivism in the long run seeks to make room for 'free individual development on the basis of unity and a closely harmonised common existence',[11] then it must radically transform itself. It cannot do this on the basis of reason and 'a mechanically scientific ordering of life',[12] but must spiritualize itself.

While considering collectivism and its future, one is tempted to think of its very opposite: anarchism. Reaction from collectivism has often led towards anarchism. Can anarchism be a satisfying social principle? Here too we must distinguish between different types of anarchism. There is a gross and vitalistic form of anarchism; we cannot expect much from it. There is then a higher form of

anarchism: *intellectual anarchism*, according to which 'all government of man by man by the power of compulsion is an evil, a violation, a suppression or deformation of a natural principle of good which would otherwise grow and prevail for the perfection of the human race'.[13]

Anarchism fails to recognize the truth that man cannot develop, even spiritually, in complete isolation, that society is needed at least 'as a field of relations which afford to the individual his occasion for growing towards a greater perfection'[14].

Further, anarchistic thought has been obsessed by the false notion that the rise of society meant a *fall* from the original perfection of man.

The element of truth in the anarchistic philosophy lies in the right insight that 'the more the outer law is replaced by an inner law, the nearer man will draw to his true and natural perfection.'[15] In the ideal state, compulsion will be replaced by loving cooperation.

To bring about this end, intellectual anarchism relies on two weapons : enlightenment of man's reason, and an appeal to the natural human sympathy or love of comrades ingrained in man.

It may be doubted however if appeal to reason and a higher emotion shall prove totally effective in sublimating the infra-rational which stands on the way. Sri Aurobindo therefore suggests what he calls *spiritualistic anarchism* as coming nearer the solution. At present as it expresses itself, this doctrine no doubt suffers from some onesidedness or other. There is the further consideration never to be lost sight of that no 'ism' can express the whole truth about the spirit. Remembering these, nevertheless we have here something near 'the discovery of the saving motive-force'.[16]

Spiritual anarchism should rely on a conception of divine brotherhood, on 'a yet unfound law of love'[17], on spiritual illumination rather than rational enlightenment, on the soul in man rather than the sentiment in the heart, on inner change rather than on mere outer change.

This principle, it may be said, is nothing new and is what religions have relied upon always. Sri Aurobindo only reminds us that though the fundamental truth of subjectivism is an old discovery, nevertheless its significance was confined to the problems of the individual alone, and there too it never got rid of other-worldliness. The spiritual truth was never caught hold by human society as its guiding

principle. Where religion tried to 'socialize' itself, it achieved little for it ended up with the setting up of churches and priests, conventions and dogmas. A true socialization of the spiritual truth is what is the need of the age.

NOTES

1. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle,* Sri Aurobindo Asram, Pondicherry, 1949, p. 33–35.
2. Ibid., p. 34.
3. Ibid., p. 49.
4. Ibid., p. 47–48.
5. Ibid., p. 54.
6. Ibid., p. 82.
7. Ibid., p. 84.
8. Ibid., p. 255.
9. Ibid., p. 267.
10. Ibid., p. 267–8 italics mine.
11. Ibid., p. 268.
12. Ibid., p. 268.
13. Ibid., p. 268.
14. Ibid., p. 269.
15. Ibid., p. 270.
16. Ibid., p. 273.
17. Ibid., p. 273.

13

Integralism and Modern Philosophical Anthropology

The purpose of this discussion is to attempt an assessment of the concept of man in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy in the light of what is coming to be known, on the European continent, as 'philosophical anthropology'. Our procedure will be to start with laying down the main lines of research brought together under the title 'Philosophical Anthropology' and then to follow it up with a statement of Sri Aurobindo's concept of man, assessing its value and relevance for the contemporary discussion of this theme.[1]

I

The term 'Philosophical Anthropology' was introduced in our time, and the task of the discipline outlined, by Max Scheler in his *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (1928). But Scheler had already formulated the main ideas in an essay 'Zur Idee des Menschen' as early as 1914. The central problem with which Scheler's philosophy is concerned is: What is man? And, what is his status in relation to Being? This problem is handled by Scheler in many of its aspects. The specific nature of human feelings is discussed in *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie* : the relation of man to history is discussed in the essay 'Mensch und Geschichte'; the possibility of human development is the theme of a lecture, 'Der Mensch in Weltalter des Ausgleichs'[2].

Two passages from Scheler may be quoted to outline the major themes :

'Philosophical anthropology is a fundamental science of the essence and essential structure of man; of his relation to the realms of Nature (the inorganic, plants and animals), as well as to the basis of all things; of his metaphysical origin as well as of his physical, psychical

and spiritual beginning in the world; of the forces and powers that move him and which he sets in motion of the basic directions and laws of his biological, psychical, cultural-historical and social development of their essential possibilities as much as of their actualities.'[3]

'It is the task of a philosophical anthropology to show exactly how, from the basic structure of human being, all the specific monopolies, creations and activities of man follow : language, conscience, crafts, weapons, ideas of justice and injustice, state, leadership, the representative functions of the arts, mythology, religion, science, historicality, and sociality.'[4]

It will readily be appreciated by those acquainted with the contents of Sri Aurobindo's works, that his philosophy has to make a substantial contribution to these themes.

Philosophical anthropology on the European continent has : (1) tried to isolate the distinctive nature and status of man, as compared with the other realms of being, living and non-living. In doing this, philosophical anthropology has (2) freed itself from a narrow 'naturalistic-scientific' approach. It has rightly seen that neither physics nor chemistry, neither biology nor physiology, nor even psychology can adequately study the nature of man, although the data of each of these sciences are not without any relevance. A truer indication of man's essential nature is in language, mythology and poetry, art and religion, science considered as man's achievement, and history, that is to say, through what is vaguely called 'culture'. Hence the intimate connection between philosophical anthropology and what is called cultural anthropology in the United States.[5] Further, insight is provided by analysis of the basic feeling-tones of human existence : hope and despair, love and hatred, trust and anxiety; hence, the inevitable alliance between philosophical anthropology and 'existence'-philosophy. As much attention is to be paid to a static-morphological study as to a historical study, for man's understanding of himself has unfolded itself in history and an important part of a study of man is the study of man's growing understanding of himself. Such understanding of himself constitutes an essential feature of man's nature. (3) With this comprehensive programme before it, it is but natural that modern philosophical anthropology cannot rest satisfied with any one-sided formulation of human nature but struggles *towards an integral philosophy of man*. The spirit of it is best expressed again by Max Scheler :

'Through his process of becoming, man has proved himself to be a being of enormous *plasticity*. It is therefore of the greatest danger for any philosophical opinion to formulate the Idea of Man too *narrowly*, to derive it from any one naturalistic or only historical form.... The idea of "animal rationale" in the classical sense was much too narrow; the "*homo faber*" of the positivists, the "dionysian Man" of Nietzche, Man as "the disease of life" of the new panromantic teachings, the "Superman", the "homo sapiens" of Linné, the "l'homme machine" of lemettries, the merely "Power"—the merely "libido"—the merely "economic"—man of Machiavelli, Freud and Marx, the fallen creature Adam—*all* these representations are much too narrow, since they are required to comprehend the *whole* man. Further, they all are at the same time Ideas of *Things*. Man, however, is not a thing—he is a *direction of movement of the universe itself*....'[6] (The italics are mine.)

II

Sri Aurobindo has given us such an integral philosophy of man. The cardinal principle of this philosophy is the principle that man is what he can be; that human existence is full of possibilities; that man as such has an unavoidable tendency towards self-exceeding. 'It is in his human nature, in all human nature, to exceed itself by conscious evolution, to climb beyond what he is.'[7] This coincides with the findings of such researchers as Martin Heidegger : what distinguishes human existence from other lower modes of being is that whereas in those modes of being actuality dominates over possibility, human existence consists in its possibilities. Heidegger, however, is concerned with what may be called 'horizontal' possibility : the possibility of oscillating on the genuine dimension of existence. Sri Aurobindo supplements this phenomenological with a genetic-evolutionary standpoint. Man has not only the possibility of leading a more inwardized, more self-conscious (i.e. the 'existentialistic') life as contrasted with the externalized life of the sensational man; he has also the possibility of growing beyond himself as the spearhead of the cosmic evolutionary process.

This integral philosophy of man has two major aspects : morphological and genetic-evolutionary. The former reveals a horizontal cross-section of human existence, brings to light the sedimented

structures within it, the immense complexity of man's nature; but it has also to show the endless existential possibilities according as man lets any one of the principles dominate the rest. The latter, i.e. the genetic-evolutionary aspect locates man in the cosmic evolutionary process and thereby determines his status and destiny. These two aspects are not unconnected, for which one reason amongst others is that the morphological complexity of human existence is but a consequence of the precise place man occupies in the cosmic-evolutionary process. Before we enter into short sketches of these major aspects, we may mention that the evolutionary aspect again shall include within it a subordinate theme : the evolution of man himself, as contrasted with cosmic evolution!

III

Looking for the complexity of human existence, one has learnt in our times to go beyond the simple rationalism of the past centuries. Christianity has already challenged the Greek rationalism and had set up against the latter the extremely difficult notion of 'sin', of the powerful irrationalism before which reason is helpless and to get rid of which one has to take the help of 'faith' and 'grace'. In recent times, Marxism and psycho-analysis have, in different ways, undermined the eighteenth-century rationalism by exhibiting the irrational forces, economic and vital, that dominate man's rational activities. The concept of 'sin' continues to influence even these anti-religious modes of thought. The overall picture that today is in our mind is that of the dark irrational dominating reason—'moral sin', 'class interest', 'will to power', 'libido' are only different aspects of this infra-rational part of our nature.

In fact, 'infra-rational' is too vague a designation of this part of our being. Lowest are *the physical and vital* strata; for the body is there with a physical existence, just as there is also 'a vitality working in this bodily form and structure as in the plant or lower animal'. Yet, of both these strata of our existence, we are aware only of a little.[8] The true subconscious lies above these basic strata : 'it is *the Inconscient* vibrating on the borders of consciousness sending up its motions to be changed into conscious stuff, swallowing into its depths impressions of past experience as seeds of unconscious habit and returning them constantly but often chaotically to the surface

consciousness.'[9] (The italics are mine.) This is what has been recognized in modern psycho-analysis, the '*ālaya-vijñāna*' of the Vijñānavādin Buddhists. It is this subconscious which is the 'dream-builder'.

But the word 'subconscious' may be used in a wider sense, in which case the subconscious cannot be taken to be identical with the infra-rational, but the infra-rational would only be the lower part of the subconscious. For, the subconscious would also include the subliminal. The subliminal is not like the unconscious, a storehouse of irrational impulses, but has its own powers and modes of action that surpass the capacities of the waking consciousness. Such phenomena as clairvoyance, telepathy, thought-reading are only manifestations of this subliminal part of our being.[10] Besides, it is the subliminal which can directly enter into other people's consciousness and accounts for many supernormal experiences. The subliminal is responsible for much of the best in art and literature, and it is false to trace all human culture to the infra-rational, the unconscious alone, as psycho-analysis has tried to do.

Besides the subconscious and the subliminal parts of our being, there is the higher, the superconscient. Whereas modern psychology has got hold of the first and, at its best (as with Jung), has got glimpses of the second, we are to turn to the yogic psychology and also to the spiritual psychologies of all countries to get to know about the last, i.e. the superconscient.

Sri Aurobindo has given us a rich phenomenology of these three spheres of our being, epecially of the subliminal and the superconscient. Each of these spheres has its own inner stratification, and, of course, points of contact between them are not lacking. There is no rigid pigeon-holing, but there are left possibilities of movement from the one into the other.[11]

It is interesting to see how the status and function of reason is delimited upon this canvas. Lying midway between two spheres, the infra-rational and the supra-rational (including the subliminal and the superconscient), reason is no original law-giver, no autonomous faculty, not its own master (except, perhaps, in a limited region of purely formal thinking). Reason is a mediator 'between the subconscient All that we come from in our evolution upwards and the superconscient All towards which we are impelled by that evolution'.[12] In the subconscient, consciousness is involved in action;

in the superconscient, action is transformed into knowledge. Standing in between them, reason fulfils an evolutionary role: it releases consciousness as it were from its 'imprisonment in the act' and prepares it 'to resume its essential primacy'.[13] While this is the evolutionary function of reason, in its multifarious activities reason is not under any one master. Now she obeys the lower vital, now the higher vital, now the subconscious, now the subliminal and at rare moments also the superconscient. In ordinary life, reason justifies one's physical–vital tendencies, economic class-interest, traditional beliefs, etc. To turn reason from its servitude to the lower strata of our being and to make it a luminous medium for the truths of the higher regions is the task before every individual.

IV

The above sketch of a phenomenology of human nature is connected, in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, with an evolutionary account of the origin and destiny of man. Sri Aurobindo, as is well known, advocates a kind of evolutionary philosophy in which there is a series of successive emergents, the whole process of emergence following upon a prior process of involution. These emergents have been : matter, life, animal consciousness and human self-consciousness. This process of emergence is characterized by three features : first, as the lower stratum advances sufficiently in complexity and configuration, a higher form emerges. Secondly, this higher, inert matter—life or consciousness as the case may be—when it appears does not reject the lower but takes it up as it were (compare Hegel's *aufheben*) and transforms it radically; thus life transforms matter in the sense that a living organism though material yet exhibits properties not to be found in inert matter! While the old and the lower is thus taken up and transformed, the new and the higher seeks to expand its own domain and to prepare itself for the emergent next-to-appear!

Man, standing as he does at the apex of the evolutionary process, includes in himself all the lower principles, not as such but as transformed and integrated under the dominant principle of his being : mental consciousness. He is a material body and also living organism; but he is primarily a self-conscious mental being. Not only are the lower principles integrated in his being under the dominant principle of mental awareness; but even the higher principles, higher

forms of awareness, are involved in him, even if under the limitations permitted by mental awareness. Hence the immense complexity of his nature, as well as the way the various aspects of his being cluster around man's self-consciousness.

In the preceding paragraph, we have spoken of integration under a dominant principle. It should immediately be added, if we are to be true to the facts, that this integration, so far as man's present stage of self-awareness is concerned, is too imperfect. The elements of that complex nature which is man's do jar and conflict; hence, the conflicts within the individual and also in human history. The growth of man's self-awareness is a growing process of integration, rather—what amounts to the same—a search for a mode of self-awareness which would prove more effective in harmonizing the lower and the higher! It is Sri Aurobindo's singular vision that this mode of self-awareness is beyond the separative mental consciousness and nearer that divine self-consciousness—towards which man is growing—for which unity and plurality do not jar.

The evolutionary philosophy, while it provides, as we have seen, the rationale of the peculiar complexity as well as the plasticity of human nature, also affords us with the fundamental *existential responsibility* that is man's and from which should follow all his religious, ethical and social 'ought-to-do's' and 'ought-to-be's'.

The evolutionary philosophy teaches that the appearance of man signifies a 'crucial step, a decisive change in the cause and process of the evolution; it is not merely a continuation of the old lines'.[14] 'In him... the substitution of a conscious for a subconscious evolution has become conceivable and practicable. ...In the previous stages of the evolution Nature's first care and effort had to be directed towards a change in the physical organization, for only so could there be a change of consciousness.... But in man a reversal is possible, indeed inevitable; for it is through his consciousness, through its transmutation ...that the evolution can and must be effected.'[15]

It is possible now, and indeed it is his spiritual responsibility, that man should consciously co-operate with the cosmic process. The *urge* is towards a higher (in the sense of being more integrated, harmonious, all-comprehensive and based not on separation but on identity) mode of consciousness. The *task* is to prepare the ground for the emergence of such a mode of consciousness, morality, individual

and social, religion, personal and institutional, art and literature, science and technology, education and social ordering—all these activities of man may be understood and evaluated in the light of this most fundamental responsibility that is placed on man by virtue of his unique position in the evolutionary process. Man, to recall Scheler's words (quoted above), is 'a direction of movement of the universe itself'; he is not only a direction, but *the* dominant direction.

V

While the preceding section lays down the basis of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, to this must be added an account of *the spiritual evolution of man himself*. For this one has to turn, to start with, to the chapter entitled, 'The Evolution of the Spiritual Man' in *The Life Divine*; but to be able to appreciate the comprehensiveness of Sri Aurobindo's approach, one must inevitably take into consideration *The Human Cycle*.

Since the evolutionary process is everywhere aiming at a comprehensive change, and not merely at the emergence of something new, the evolution of the spiritual man is bound to be a slow and laborious process. For, it is not enough if the spiritual being alone is developed; it is also required that the outer crusts of our being also shall be developed and transformed. The evolution of man therefore has a twofold aspect; an evolution of our outward nature and an evolution of our inner being. In the case of man, the former means primarily the development of our mind 'to its greatest possible range, height, subtlety; for only so can be prepared the unveiling of an entirely intuitive intelligence'.[16]

There is an original 'amalgam of religion, occultism and mystic experience',[17] which characterizes the early human mind. This belongs to what is called in *The Human Cycle* the symbolic age. There is however a growing 'tendency towards intellectualization', along with which the occult element diminishes; and there arises 'a movement to cut out everything but creed, institution, formal practice and ethics'. This characterizes the typal age of *The Human Cycle*. Soon all spiritual content vanishes, leaving behind nothing but conventions. It seems as if the spiritual evolution of man would be totally frustrated. But Nature has her own way of working. The age of convention helps the dawning of a new era of individualism

and rationalism. The individual revolts against conventions and takes to reason as his guiding principle—science and socialism are the twin outcome of this era. Curiously enough, as *The Human Cycle* vividly portrays, in the hands of both the individual is swallowed up, and reason proves a poor guiding principle. After attaining to a high watermark of development, rationalism has yielded room to a new search for the soul, a deeper subjectivism which according to Sri Aurobindo would provide the basis for the future of mankind.

It is clear that here again the emphasis is on integration. The future of mankind lies in more and more of integration of the different principles constituting his complex nature.

Intellectualization of the earlier spiritual cultures was not a falling away, a retrogression; it was the beginning of a new line of development, an attempt towards the perfecting of a new faculty, i.e. intellect. What the primitive man had vaguely sensed through intuition was later sought to be apprehended through a perfected reason. The consequence was beneficial to both. For we cannot say that the vague intuitions of the primitive man were perfect; all that was only a beginning. Ages of human experiments through which the human mind has been perfecting itself are making possible a richer intuitive grasp of the truth of things and therefore a more integrated form of awareness.

We have considered Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of man in three of its aspects : (1) in the morphological analysis of human nature, (2) in relation to the cosmic evolutionary process, and finally (3) in relation to the story of the spiritual evolution of man himself. Bearing in mind Scheler's demand for an integral philosophy of man, we may look up to Sri Aurobindo's works for a satisfying answer.

NOTES

1. Compare, for this entire theme, the author's *Modern Philosophical Anthropology and the Concept of Man in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy* (Bombay: Sri Aurobindo Circle Annual, 1956).
2. These essays are included in the volume *Philosophische Weltanschauung* (München, 1954).

3. Ibid., p. 62.
4. Max Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* (München, 1947), p. 80.
5. Compare H. Wein, 'Trends in Philosophical Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology in Postwar Germany' (*Philosophy of Science*, Vol. 24, No. 1, January 1957), pp. 46–56.
6. *Philosophische Weltanschauung* (München, 1954), p. 96.
7. Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 638, also cp. p. 750.
8. Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 498.
9. Ibid., pp. 499, 654.
10. Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 479.
11. Ibid., p. 480 f.
12. Ibid., p. 62.
13. Ibid., p. 63.
14. Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 750.
15. Ibid., p. 751.
16. Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 763.
17. Ibid., p. 771.

14
Sarvodaya and Aurobindo : A Rapprochement

Amongst the streams of thought that have nourished the modern Indian mind, for better or worse, three stand out with unquestioned pre-eminence; and at the heads of these three stand three colossal personalities : Tagore, Aurobindo and Gandhi. The three streams flowed apart but have together enriched the common spiritual 'apperceptive mass' of the modern Indian mind. One of the interesting tasks of the student of contemporary Indian culture consists in following these three streams in their separate courses as also in their occasional mingling. The contact between Gandhi and Tagore developed into intimate personal affection and regard and there is no dearth of witness to the innumerable ways in which they influenced each other. There were besides valuable personal links between Śāntiniketan and Sevāgrām (C.F. Andrews and the Āryanāyakams being amongst them). In fact, the proportion and the manner in which the two ideals were fused vary from person to person. One could in any case say that the contact developed into a common spiritual *attitude*, not a uniform formula of synthesis. However, notwithstanding the personal intimacy between Gandhi and Tagore, and notwithstanding the ways in which Śāntiniketan and Sevāgrām gave and took from each other, the two ideals continued to retain their distinctive individualities.

As contrasted with the happy and spontaneous give-and-take—despite basic differences—that characterized the relationship between Sevāgrām and Śāntiniketan, one is struck by a certain reticence in the relationship between Pondicherry and Sevāgrām. We know only little—save remarks that convey general admiration—of what the two Masters thought of each other. But their paths were different. Nor were the good offices of persons who could mediate available

in that measure as in the other case. Political antecedents—I mean, Aurobindo's past associations with the extremist political movement in the country (the exact nature of this association has yet to be determined!)—served to obscure *the spiritual affinity* which might have been there. It came to be clearly forgotten—or, at least, the relevance of this fact in the present context was not sufficiently weighed—that Aurobindo was also an ardent advocate of passive resistance. The last severing force was imparted by the differing attitudes towards the Second World War : Pondicherry supported the Allied war effort unconditionally; Sevāgrām was willing to offer passive resistance to the aggressors if necessary, but not cooperation to the foreign power that ruled the country.

It is not my purpose to evaluate these political differences; neither do I intend denying that such differences existed and do exist. What I intend doing is to draw attention to a certain spiritual affinity that connects the philosophy of *sarvodaya* with that of Aurobindo—a spiritual affinity that, long unnoticed and even neglected, has now proved itself capable of developing into an intellectual synthesis. By this I have the philosophy of Vinoba Bhave in mind. Vinoba combines in his thought the socio-ethical ideal of *sarvodaya* with the evolutionary and spiritual philosophy of Aurobindo.

THE GOAL

The goal is human perfection, perfection of the individual as of society and spiritual perfection in a sense that does not exclude material and vital well-being. *Sarvodaya* no doubt emphasizes the social aspect of the ideal, but to it goes the credit of never having lost sight of the values that constitute and nourish individuality. The socialism of *sarvodaya* owes its special traits precisely to its unwavering consciousness of the *spiritual* needs of the individual. Aurobindo's practical philosophy starts with the individual and recommends to him the path of *yoga*, but as is well known the ideal that is held up before the individual is *not* that of his own self-perfection to the utter neglect of others. On the contrary, Aurobindo's spiritual teaching is dominated by a poignant awareness of the destiny and the needs of mankind at large. The charge of individualism against Aurobindo is as little justified as the opposite charge against *sarvodaya*. In both philosophies there is awareness of the truth that

true individuality is not exclusive but inclusive. Aurobindo recognizes that man cannot develop, even spiritually, in complete isolation, that society is needed at least 'as a field of relations which afford to the individual his occasion for growing towards a greater perfection'[1]. Anarchism, we are told, has been obsessed by the false notion that the rise of society meant a *fall* from the original perfection of man. The necessity of unifying his life with that of others is a spiritual need of man, and society provides for it, however imperfectly. This conception of the mutual dependence of individual and society underlies both the philosophies; the conception of the ideal state of human perfection, in both cases, takes into consideration both the poles, the individual and the collectivity.

THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL IDEALS

For *sarvodaya*, the principle that gives shape to the means for attaining the goal is *ahiṁsā* or non-violence. Much has been made of this principle of *ahiṁsā*; followers of Gandhi and Aurobindo have in the past found here an issue over which they could irreconcilably stand apart, as if the one upholds an ideal of merely moral perfection while the other envisages a state of spiritual perfection of which the moral standards fail to hold good. This is a false contrast and one needs to go deeper in order to perceive that a common faith underlies the two.

In order to be able to bring this point to light, I would go into the problem of the *relation between the moral and the spiritual ideals*. It is possible to express this relation—borrowing the language of the *Gītā*—as the relation between the ideal of *sāttvika* life and that of *nistraiguṇya*, the former being the ideal of morality, the latter that of the spiritual life. The moral ideal of a *sāttvika* life consists in virtues like truthfulness, simplicity, non-injury, absence of greed and jealousy etc. The *Gītā*, after eulogizing this *sāttvika* ideal (as contrasted with the *tāmasika* and the *rājasika*) goes on, in the long run, to accord the highest place to the ideal of 'transcending the three *guṇas*'. The spiritually perfect person is *guṇātīta*. What precisely is the relationship between the ideal of morality and the ideal of the spiritual life?

There are many who are of the opinion that in the spiritual ideal

the moral standards are totally negated. This would amount to saying that a spiritually perfect person knows no moral fetters, accepts no moral standards, is 'a law unto himself'. Having attained the freedom which spiritual liberation confers on him, such a person may apply himself to any task, even to tasks that would be judged adversely by the usual moral standards. With non-attachment, *anāsakti*, one is supposed to be able to do whatever one is called upon to do even if such action be morally bad. Underlying this interpretation of the two key notions of the *Gītā*, *anāsakti* and *nistraiguṇya*, there is the philosophical doctrine that what, from the spiritual point of view, matters is the spirit in which an action is done and *not* its content. Given the right spirit, the inner freedom, the *anāsakti*, the 'transcendence', any content is compatible with the ideal. This doctrine has no doubt an external semblance with Kant's emphasis on the bare form of morality. Many of those who hold this opinion even go to the extent of saying that a *liberated* person may take resort to killing and violence, murder and robbery with impunity!

This at once exposes the error and the spiritual irresponsibility implied in such opinions. The state of *anāsakti* is *not* a state of indifference, of bare absence of motives, a vacuum, as if it were compatible with any content whatsoever. It is rather a positive state of love and sense of equality for all beings in such a way that it is compatible only with the highest moral virtues. Not all actions could be done with non-attachment. (To imagine that all actions, irrespective of their contents, could be done in the right spirit is the source of the error in the opinion mentioned above.) It is only the moral life that can be 'transformed'—not negated—into the spiritual; the immoral cannot be taken over, transformed and given the stamp of spirituality. The spiritually perfect person, the *gunātīta*, does not cease to be moral. The freedom of 'transcendence' is not spurious freedom of 'doing whatever one likes to do', but is that inner necessity which excludes all that is intrinsically incompatible with it.

What then is the difference between the merely moral life and the spiritually 'transformed' moral life? The difference may be brought out by a reference to Kant. Kant who represents moral life as an unconditional obedience to the Categorical Imperative ends up by describing moral perfection as a state of autonomy, the

morally perfect person as self-legislative. It is possible to see here the distinction and the relationship we are after. The merely moral state consists in obedience to the law. Spiritual freedom comes with the realization that moral life is not obedience, but autonomy; that goodness is not conformity to an external standard but issues out of one's own innermost nature, so that the law, the Imperative, is the law of one's own being.

Seen in this light, the false opposition between the moral and the spiritual collapses. It is not however the intention of the above discussion to deny the endless possibilities of spiritual progress that lie beyond the frontiers of what is conventionally called moral; nor is it meant to give the stamp of absolute incorrigibility to the conventional moral distinctions. But it seeks to emphasize the fact that spiritual progress builds upon moral foundations and that the fundamental moral values are transformed, possibly also deepened and widened, but not negated in the long run.

Aurobindo's philosophy aims at a radical transformation of present human nature, and it is true that much of our moral distinctions belong to the present imperfect mental level. But Aurobindo also recognizes the need of developing the lower so that the lower may be able to accept and contain the higher. Moral development, of the individual as well as of society, is therefore an indispensable condition of the realisation of the spiritual Ideal.

SATYAGRAHA

Vinoba Bhave has recently drawn our attention to the fact that the entire significance of *satyāgraha* is not exhausted by the use made of it during the struggle for political freedom. Gandhi himself was never unaware of this truth: he was rather always conscious that his was a mere experiment with truth, that even of *satyāgraha* he had only meagre glimpses. And the concrete form in which we meet *satyāgraha* during those days is determined partly by the demands of the situation and partly by the limited results Gandhi's experiments had yielded him. It would therefore be unwise to judge Gandhi's vision of the end and of the means solely by the *actual* technique employed by him during his lifetime. A true understanding of Gandhian philosophy refuses to limit it to a set of dogmas and techniques.

Satyāgraha, as a means, stands for the method by which the spirit could prevail over matter and transform it. This is the basic faith, the common denominator, of all that is sought to be conveyed by such expression as 'change of heart', 'change of mind' etc. Making use of a distinction drawn by Vinoba, we could say that whereas violent revolutions seeks to change the inner by means of outer changes, non-violent revolution, *satyāgraha*, aims at changing the outer by means of inner changes. It is through change of consciousness, of the heart and the mind, that *satyāgraha* seeks to bring about, for example, socio-economic changes.

Keeping this basic idea behind *satyāgraha* in mind, we can easily see that its actual applications may differ on different levels and under different circumstances. An individual may change another's way of life by the sheer purity of one's mind, by the love in one's heart, or even by the sweet charm of one's words. With one's love steadfast and faith in human goodness firm, one may even convert an attacking enemy into a loving comrade. The application, or let us even say extension, of *satyāgraha* into the field of collective endeavours like political agitation and socio-economic revolution has been experimented upon by Gandhi and Vinoba. But it is too much to say—and Gandhi and Vinoba would be the last to say so—that we have had in their efforts a full vision of the power of *satyāgraha*. The powers of the spirit are endless, and the ways in which the spirit could prevail over, and transform, matter are also endless.

With regard to the future line of development of *satyāgraha*, Vinoba has raised a pertinent question which is of relevance in our present context. Faced as we are today with the impersonal destructive power of the atom, is *satyāgraha*, as traditionally understood, of any use in taming and directing, counteracting and prevailing over, that immense power? Would the loving heart, the affectionate words and the sweet looks of the *satyāgrahī* be of any use in counteracting the vast impersonal powers of destruction, as they had been in influencing individuals with whom one came in direct or indirect personal contact? Science has brought mankind into a situation where re-thinking is needed about the means of *survival*. What spiritual power could adequately cope with this situation?

Vinoba's answer is that the *satyāgrahī* who would take upon himself this task needs to develop the powers of the spirit beyond the

hitherto explored limits. Using language that brings him nearer Aurobindo, Vinoba suggests that the *satyāgrahī* should raise himself above the mental level and should attain to the supramental level of consciousness. This alone would arm him sufficiently to enable him to neutralize and then to direct constructively the powers released by modern science.

Vinoba has thus shown that the Gandhian concepts of *ahiṁsā* and *satyāgraha* are not just bundles of rigid dogmas, but are capable of endless extension with the change of circumstances and with the moral and spiritual progress of man in individual and collective life.

Vinoba's evolutionary outlook[2] thus forms the connecting link, the point of contact, between *sarvodaya* and the philosophy of Aurobindo.

IDEAL SOCIAL ORDER

Let us now turn to the picture of the ideal social order drawn by Aurobindo in his inimitable *The Human Cycle* and see how close it comes to the *sarvodaya* ideal.

The 'ideal law of social development'[3] should take into consideration the three poles of human existence : the individual, the community, and mankind in general. Each has its own destiny, its own needs, its own law of growth. Mankind, Aurobindo believes, is marching towards a far-off ideal of perfection. But within the fold of this common destiny of mankind, each individual and each community has to follow its own unique line of development. Believing, though, in a general pattern of progress for all mankind, Aurobindo would yet concede to the modern revolt of the individual spirit against all forms of authoritarianism. 'No State or legislator or reformer can cut him vigorously into a perfect pattern; no Church or priest can give him a mechanical salvation.'[4] And, yet, at the same time, the individual belongs not only to humanity in general, but also to a community. The ideal of mankind is too large. The community 'stands as a mid-term' between the individual and mankind. The community has also, not unlike the individual, its own right to free and unfettered development, though this right implies the corresponding obligation on the part of a community to respect the freedom of the individual as well as of other communities. The 'ideal law of social development' requires a harmony between the

needs and the interests of these three terms of existence. The law of the individual is 'to perfect his individuality by free development from within', and at the same time to respect and to aid the same development in others, to help the growth of the community and to contribute towards the perfections of humanity. The law for the community is to develop from within, but also to respect and to aid the same development in other communities and in individuals and to 'pour itself out as a force' for the perfection of humanity. Humanity should take advantage of the free development of the individuals and the communities and should pursue its upward evolution towards the far-off goal.

The ideal relationship between the individual, the community and humanity provides the perspective from which Aurobindo offers valuable comments upon the various social and political theories. Individualism has the merit of insisting upon the right of the individual to free self-development: but its fault consists in a false conception of the individual. It exaggerates the egoistic self and loses sight of the unity that binds all individuals together. The merit of collectivism is precisely its insistence upon this unity; but it dangerously tends towards effacing the individual and his needs and setting up a collective ego in place of the individual ego. But even when the individual revolts against collectivism and reasserts his freedom, 'he may have learned to do it on the basis of this unity, and not on the basis of his separate egoistic life'.[5] Similarly, collectivism itself may come to realize[6] that it can fulfil its aim only by permitting free development of the individual. But this would require a spiritualization of the collective ideal, a replacement of the outer law by the inner. 'And the perfect social state must be one in which governmental compulsion is abolished and man is able to live with his fellow man by free agreement and cooperation.'[7]

Is this far from the fundamental convictions of the *sarvodaya* ideal? Does it not, on the contrary, provide a philosophical basis for all that *sarvodaya* stands for?

INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL ANARCHISM

But how to bring about this ideal state of affairs? Aurobindo considers two methods[8]. One of these he calls 'intellectual anarchism'. By 'intellectual anarchism', Aurobindo means the method of enlighten-

ing man's reason of appealing to 'natural human sympathy', to 'the love of comrades' or 'the principle of fraternity' with a view to bringing about 'a free equality founded upon spontaneous cooperation'. His criticism of this method gives expression to one of the toughest problems with which Aurobindo's mind was exercised : the problem of dealing adequately with the infra-rational elements in man. Unless a solution to this problem was found out, all methods would stop short of carrying us to the goal. The 'intellectual anarchist' does not sufficiently realize the pull which the infra-rational in man exercises, the way in which it thwarts all the best intentions of the higher reason. What is needed, therefore, is some means of dealing squarely with this factor in human affairs, and for this purpose Aurobindo prefers the other method which he calls 'spiritual anarchism'. 'Spiritual anarchism' should centre upon a growing number of spiritually evolved individuals who would canalize their spiritual energy in the direction of uplifting both the community and mankind at large. Such spiritually developed individuals should 'recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being'.[9] 'They will not make society a shadowy background to a few luminous spiritual figures. They will not accept the theory that the many must necessarily remain for ever on the lower ranges of life and only a few climb into the free air and the light, but will start from the standpoint of the great spirits who have striven to regenerate the life of the earth and held that faith in spite of all previous failure'[10].

The philosophy of *sarvodaya* shares this belief in the possibility of spiritually regenerating mankind. Further, even if *sarvodaya* believes in awakening the masses, this process could start only with the initiative of a few individuals. The greater the spiritual attainments of such individuals, the more effective would be their influence upon the masses. The more that the spirit intensifies itself, the more effectively can it arouse the spirit in others and, at the same time, prevail over and transform matter. In fact, the essence of non-violent revolution is the process of transforming the outer by the inner, of changing matter with the aid of the spirit. This sets no limit, as was said before, upon the possibilities that lie open to the spirit. The limited moral ideal that worked well in the case ot the political struggle for independence is not perhaps equally effective in solving the many more complicated issues with which mankind is faced.

One understands therefore why Vinoba should have emphasized the idea of transcending the mental level of consciousness. The philosophy of *sarvodaya* is not a set of dogmas; in its essence, it is compatible with any attempt of the spirit to prevail over matter and to socialize itself. It is necessary, therefore, to bear in mind this essence of *sarvodaya*, as distinguished from the limited applications of it under varying circumstances. With the growth of the human spirit, new applications would no doubt enrich our understanding of this truth. Perhaps, in the long run, no *philosophy* would be able to embody or *state* the unlimited possibilities of spiritual development.

NOTES

1. *The Human Cycle*, p. 269.
2. Discussed in the next essay 'Vinoba's Gāndhīsm'.
3. Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Pondicherry, 1949) chap. 7.
4. Ibid., p. 79.
5. Ibid., p. 267–8.
6. Ibid., p. 268.
7. Ibid., p. 210.
8. Ibid., p. 27of.
9. Ibid., p. 320.
0. Ibid., p. 330.

15
The Mind Behind Bhoodān : Shri Vinoba Bhave's Land-gift Movement

The purpose of this essay is to draw attention to some remarkable ideas Vinobaji has been propounding in his lectures for some time past. It is known that Vinobaji does not look upon *Bhoodān* as merely a socio-economic programme; *Bhoodān*, according to him, is a movement that aims at the spiritual transformation of man by awakening in him the spirit of sacrifice and love. Besides, believing as he does in evolution, Vinobaji connects this ideal with the evolutionary trend inherent in the human nature. A human society founded on love and self-sacrifice is not only desirable, but, according to Vinobaji, inevitable. This idea of inevitability, coupled with a belief in evolution and progress, lends to Vinobaji's position a timely relevance that appeals to the modern mind. But there is another aspect of Vinobaji's recent utterances. He is not only developing the historical relevance of the ideal of *sarvodaya* but is also interested in the ultimate ideal of human perfection, and has devoted some of his thought to this problem. This has led him to reflect upon the relevance of the Vedānta, the nature of self-knowledge, the possibility of universal religion of man etc. It is to some of these reflections that we seek to draw attention, and, in doing this, reference shall be made only to a few selected discourses.[1]

One remarkable feature of these discourses—and this can provide us with the starting point for the present discussion—is an awareness of the endless possibilities of human perfection. Already in his *Gītā-pravacan*, a series of reflections of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Vinobaji shows this awareness. No quality, he tells us there, is manifested in its perfection. This holds good even of such fundamental principles as truth and non-violence. Not even the ancient seers—Vinobaji is willing to concede—realized these principles in all their implications

and aspects. If in our age we claim the credit for having extended the application of non-violence to the collective, socio-economic sphere, it must nevertheless be conceded that future generations will look upon our experiments and our realizations as mere beginnings.

In his discourse in Mysore on November 8th, 1957, Vinobaji recommends to religion a distant unrealized ideal. Has not natural science always had such ideals before it, ideals that at one time had seemed too fantastic to be capable of realization but which nevertheless have been progressively approached, thereby leading science perpetually ahead? As contrasted with natural science, religion, whose aim is self-knowledge, *Ātma-jñāna*, has placed before itself a meagre ideal: for the common religious soul, it is the ideal of a quiet and detached life with peace of mind and indifference to what goes on around. 'From whatever I have read of religious literature,' says Vinobaji, 'I have come to the understanding that only a tiny portion of the possibilities of self-knowledge has been realized by mankind.' When another person suffers from pain, a religious soul feels compassion; but were there pervasive self-knowledge, he would have felt that pain himself, or the suffering person would have experienced the religious soul's inner peace and quietude! The more self-knowledge develops its unrealized potentialities, the more capable shall it be of removing discord and strife, which are due to ignorance. An *Ātmajñāni* in this sense is not one who escapes from life's conflicts to attain to inner peace and freedom but one whose very presence dispels conflict as light removes darkness.

The distant ideal that Vinobaji places before religion and self-knowledge is that of a *collective samādhi*. The ideal, it may be said, is too remote. But Vinobaji says : 'I am unable to express how much of inspiration I derive from the thought of such an unattainable ideal. Such a desire fills my very marrows.'

Vinobaji is not alone in cherishing this ideal of collective liberation. Even within the fold of classical Advaita, we find advocates of what has been called *Sarvanmukti*. The classical text for this is to be found in Appyayadikshita's *Siddhāntaleṣasamgraha*. In a symposium at the Indian Philosophical Congress, 1932, Dr. Radhakrishnan defended the thesis that complete liberation comes about only when all souls are liberated and the world is redeemed. Dr. Radhakrishnan's Hibbert Lectures and, more recently, his 'Fragments of a Confession'[2] and *Recovery of Faith*[3] contain brilliant statements of this idea.

Nevertheless, the idea of a collective liberation remains full of conceptual difficulties, the more so inasmuch as both Appyayadikshita and Radhakrishnan seek to accommodate it within the framework of Śaṁkara's Advaita, for which individuality and history are devoid of any transcendental (*pāramārthika*) significance.

Sri Aurobindo is on surer ground, for his Integral Advaita grants transcendental significance to individuality and history. He can therefore place before mankind a collective spiritual ideal, the possibility of a spiritual transformation of the human race instead of the salvation of individual souls.

Vinobaji, when he speaks of a collective *samādhi*, has yet to clarify its theoretical basis and its practical implications. In what sense shall it be *samādhi*, and how, again, *collective*?

One thing is clear. Vinobaji is prepared to go beyond traditional Vedānta. In his discourse at Srirangapattan on September 11th, 1957, Vinobaji declares the old Vedāntic thought to be inadequate. He is not rejecting Vedānta. Only,

> *Vedānta*, like science, is a growing process. No scientist claims that science has become perfect; on the other hand, he can only lay claim to a small part of the inexhaustible domain of science. Likewise, we should not agree that we have had a complete experience of *Vedānta*. The perfection of *Vedānta*, of metaphysical knowledge, is also in the process of being achieved.

Vedānta, *i.e.*, man's knowledge of the *Ātman* and the identity of all selves, is continuously in process of being realized. It is the theory, the propositional formulation, which may have the appearance of being complete and unchangeable. But the experience, the realization, is never complete. Looked at from the point of view of history, man's understanding of himself is indeed a growing process. New aspects of the truth as well as applications and implications of familiar aspects make their appearance. And application is not extrinsic to understanding but enriches it. Fresh understanding and new application are inseparable. If this be so, then even modern science's attempts to know man, as well as contemporary attempts to establish a socio-economic order based on equality, love and fraternity, are contributing factors towards this growing realization of the Vedānta. The age-old truth about the identity of selves no more pertains only to the spiritual experiences of a few but extends

down to the temporal and finds its application in collective life as well. There is a comprehensive attempt to get rid of the barrier between the spiritual and the secular, the eternal and the temporal; and when this succeeds our understanding of Vedānta will advance forward.

One has to bear all this in mind in order to understand Vinobaji when he tells us, in a remarkable discourse which was given in Mysore on November 4th, 1957, that the true Religion of Man has not yet been built. The foundation is there. 'What however has not yet been built upon this foundation is the superstructure, the 'house of religion,' in which the individual as well as the society were to find their shelter.' What Vinobaji means by the superstructure can only be an integral religion which shall do justice to all the aspects of life, individual and social. What is still lacking, for example, is a religion of the body which, when it comes into being, would give religious worth to manual labour; that again would imply a social order and social values different from those existing. Further, such an integral religion should not be based on considerations referring to an after-life: in such a religion, virtue and vice should be directly experienced in this life. 'If the catastrophe of Hiroshima is not hell, what else is?'

Here, again, Vinobaji believes, science is on our side. 'Science is not merely helping. It is also threatening.' We shall see below how this could be so.

Such an integral religion will bring into existence a new type of man : *Viśwamānava*. Vinobaji has devoted a discourse (Bangalore, October 18th, 1957) to this theme which reminds us of Whitehead's celebrated definition of religion as 'world-loyalty.'

Science and self-knowledge are the two indispensable means of human progress, says Vinobaji (Pattamundai, Orissa, on March 1st, 1955, and Kerala on August 8th, 1957). The one accelerates motion, while the other directs it. Science provides us, as it were, with feet; self-knowledge, with eyes. If one has eyes but no feet, he can only look around but has to limit his movements. Without eyes, the feet can move about but cannot find the right way. Science can serve, but it can also destroy. By itself, science cannot decide between possible uses of the power it confers. It is self-knowledge that can decide and direct. *Sarvodaya*—to mention one of Vinobaji's favourite themes—is born out of the union of *Ātmajñāna* with *Vijñāna*.

This equation expresses Vinobaji's faith that *sarvodaya* is a modern creed to meet the needs of the modern man. One may consider this equation in various ways. But the one implication which Vinobaji seems to have in mind is this.

Ancient self-knowledge teaches, amongst other truths, the identity of all selves and the ethics of love and 'renunciation'. 'Give up the 'I' and the 'mine,'' teaches the Vedānta. Science, it could be said in general, inculcates the ideas of evolution and progress; a sense of history and an awareness of the historical situation, a collective point of view and a feeling for the temporal needs as contrasted with the purely spiritual aspirations. The *sarvodaya* outlook on life combines these two.

More specifically, it is the recent developments in science and technology which, according to Vinobaji, make a *sarvodaya* outlook on life imperative. For, firstly, these developments make it increasingly clearer that science and violence cannot any longer go together, that their alliance would lead to the destruction of humanity and therefore of science itself, and that science if it is to prosper unhampered must seek alliance with non-violence. Limited violence worked well when science and technology had not advanced to the point where they are now. Now, however, violence would know no limits if aided by science. Science demands today, for its own future, acceptance of the moral principles of non-violence and love.

Secondly, the atomic age should bring about a total change in our valuations and in the principles of social ordering. Today, while we are economically dependent on the rest of the world, we yet think in terms of our nation, religion, locality, caste, etc. While commercialism is parading as internationalism, it fosters petty vanities: the two combined lead to conflicts which, in the atomic age, could cause a total disaster. The *sarvodaya* outlook on life suggests a reversal of this situation as the means to our survival and progress. Let there be economically self-sufficient units: let our material desires be limited as circumstances demand, but let our thoughts transcend petty vanities and be inspired by the thought of humanity. Let us consume goods produced by our immediate neighbours; but let us think of ourselves, and of others, as men and not in terms of nations, religions, localities or castes : 'Limit your desires and universalize your minds.' This is the teaching of

ancient religion and the demand of the situation created by modern science and technology.

These few thoughts, selected and put together out of the endlessly variegated and rich discourses of Vinobaji, will reveal the mind behind the *Bhoodān* Movement in a new light, as one which, steeped in the traditional wisdom, nevertheless does not lean on traditional statements as final unalterable truths; as one which, though welcoming science and technology and believing in history and progress, yet sees the need directing human affairs with the help of the principles of love and non-violence; and as one which, supremely visionary, is yet intensely concerned with the needs of the age.

NOTES

1. Authoritative Hindi versions of Vinobaji's discourses were kept and issued thrice a week with the title 'Vinoba-Pravacan' by the Akhil Bharata Sarva Seva Sangha Prakashan, Kashi at the time this essay was written.
2. Contributed to *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan*, edited by P.A. Schilpp.
3. *Recovery of Faith* (London, 1956).

16
Science and Self-knowledge

The title of this essay derives from a favourite theme of Sri Vinoba Bhave, some of whose lectures have been collected, edited, and translated into English by me under this same title.[1] While it will be my purpose to present before you the leading ideas contained in these lectures of Vinoba Bhave, I intend placing them against the background of contemporary Indian thought. For Vinoba Bhave does not lay claim to any total departure from the spirit of the main stream of contemporary Indian thought, from the time of Rammohun Roy, to Sri Ramakrishna and Swani Vivekananda, and, more recently, to Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo.

According to Vinoba Bhave, the two forces that move human destiny are science and self-knowledge. The word 'self-knowledge' is taken to connote all that is essential in religion and spirituality. As contrasted with self-knowledge, science may be characterized—following Sri Aurobindo in his *Evolution*—as 'world-knowledge'. The two, world-knowledge and self-knowledge, affect human destiny in two different ways. Science helps to bring about outer changes; self-knowledge brings about inner transformation. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to suppose that this separation of function is an absolute bifurcation, based as it is on the dubious distinction between the outer and the inner. In fact, science and technology, in spite of all their achievements in shaping man's outer living conditions, also affect the human mind, although indirectly, as we shall have occasion to show. Similarly, self-knowledge does not leave man's outer life untouched. Religious and spiritual thought has always issued out into the sphere of man's outer existence, individual and social. As Aurobindo puts it, 'the inward too is not complete if the outward is left out of account. ... to pursue an inner liberty and perpetuate

an outer slavery... was also an anomaly that had to be exploded...'[2]

In fact, we may say that one of the main characteristics of this contemporary movement of Indian thought is the denial of an absolute distinction between the inner and the outer, the spiritual and the secular, the individual and the social. This is reflected as much in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda as in the philosophies of Tagore, Gandhi, and Aurobindo.

In order to be able to show that science and self-knowledge have any positive bearing upon each other, it is necessary to explode the erroneous notion that science is impersonal and amoral in character. Here, in lieu of a detailed discussion of what is, in itself, a special problem, I shall content myself with the discussion of a few major aspects.

MAN AND NATURE

Firstly, as the philosopher Hockings has pointed out, 'It is quite possible to regard the whole modern scientific effort, from the sixteenth century onward, as an effort inspired by an ethical consideration. Empiricism is itself a form of self-denial a moral will to let the object speak for itself'.[3] Hocking is drawing attention to the often neglected fact that the spirit of scientific enquiry is inseparably blended with a certain ethical attitude of detachment and self-abnegation.

Secondly, Joseph Needham, the Cambridge scientist, has drawn our attention to the remarkable historical fact that experimental science, from its very beginning, found an ally in religious mysticism, but had to struggle against scholastic rationalism.[4] Rational theology was anti-scientific, while mystical theology was pro-scientific. The sort of mysticism which helped science had, according to Needham, three components : (i) it acknowledged the existence of mysteries transcending reason; (ii) it believed in the efficacy of manual operations; and (iii) it denied authority.

Neither science nor nature is impersonal. For a brilliant defence of the view that both science and nature are inseparable from man, one has only to turn to Tagore's *Personality* and *Religion of Man*. Tagore brings home to us a truth that we are all apt to forget : the truth that the scientist, the logician, the technician, these are all men; that science is a human pursuit and is sustained by a community

of scientific persons. Thus he says that when this centre of human personality is taken away, 'then it falls to pieces, becomes a heap of abstractions, matter and force, logical symbols, and even those... would vanish into absolute nothingness, if the logical person in the centre, to whom they are related in some harmony of reason, were nowhere'[5]. Again, 'even the impersonal aspect of truth dealt with by Science belongs to the human universe'[6] so that 'the highest mission of science is to find the universe enveloped by the human comprehension.[7] The scientist's world, the poet goes on to tell us, is 'the impersonal human world of truths'.[8]

For both Tagore and Aurobindo, man and nature are inseparable. To separate them would be, for Tagore, like 'dividing the bud and the blossom'; to Aurobindo, man represents the advance of nature towards a higher level of perfection. For both, nature develops into spirit, for spirit is implicit in nature.[9] Man's inquiry into the secrets of nature, which constitutes science, is therefore inseparable from man's inquiry into his own nature, which constitutes self-knowledge.

There is no reason, therefore, to see in science something demoniac, something that leads man astray from the path of self-knowledge or as something which retards his spiritual progress. It is one of the persistent themes of Vinoba Bhave's lectures that science is furthering man's spiritual progress. To see how it does so is our present task.

That science with all its materialistic bias during the nineteenth century nevertheless conferred upon man certain spiritual benefits is thus recognized by Aurobindo : 'It has also, paradoxical as that might at first seem, strengthened man's idealism. On the whole, it has given him a kindlier hope and humanized his nature. Tolerance is greater, liberty has increased, charity is more a matter of course, peace, if not yet practicable, is growing at least imaginable.[10] Vinoba Bhave adds to this a more revolutionary implication; that scientific knowledge is contributing not merely to the stock of our information, it is also contributing towards the upward evolution of human consciousness and sensibility. Aurobindo used to insist on the fact that the intuitions of the ancient seers were not in conflict with the later intellectual philosophies; there was no retrogression of the spirit. The progress of spirit is not linear. What the ancients vaguely received through intuition, the human mind soon sought to grasp

through intellect. The original immediacy of apprehension was no doubt for the time being lost, but the net result was an unthought of development of the human intellect. It is undeniable that the sharpening and chastening of the intellect should contribute towards a total upgrading of human consciousness in general.

Vinoba Bhave thinks that both science and self-knowledge demand a transcendence of the limits of mental consciousness. Self-knowledge has always pressed beyond that limit; but now even science, paradoxically, is making it imperative in various ways. We may understand this in two ways. In the first place, the scientific attitude seeks to attain to an ideal of detachment, self-annihilation, and universality that is hardly compatible with the exclusiveness, the self-assertion, and the attachments of mental consciousness. The plane of *vijñāna* is higher than that of *manas*. Secondly, contemporary science, with all its technological accompaniments, makes it *imperative* for all to cultivate a higher form of sensibility. We now turn to this part of Vinoba Bhave's teachings.

HIGHER SENSIBILITY

Science and self-knowledge need each other. Just as a bird flies with her two wings, says Vinoba[11] so should man forge ahead with the twin powers of science and self-knowledge : the former is comparable to our feet, the latter to the eyes. Without the latter, science cannot find its right way forward. The particular use that man makes of science is determined by the character of his self-knowledge.[12] The use may be for commerce, for industry, for aggression, or for co-operation. To each such use there corresponds a certain type of self-knowledge : the conception of the self as bodily, as vital, as mental, and so on. Vinoba Bhave seems to be of the opinion that it is only on a truly Vedāntic conception of the self that the right use of science and technology should depend.

This need of cooperation between the two is an imperative need today. For a stage has arrived in the course of the development of science where an inadequate conception of self, if made the basis of human affairs, would bring ruin upon mankind. That the wide scope of human knowledge and the immense technological power at his disposal are not in proportion to his inner spiritual attainments is a malady that is recognized by many sensitive thinkers of our

time. Vinoba Bhave's thought, however, is marked by the belief that there is no room for despair, that an adjustment is destined to emerge.

Let me illustrate this by referring to the relation between science and non-violence. Non-violence, as an ethical code, has its roots in the knowledge of the identity of all selves. Now, it has been usual amongst the votaries of non-violence, not excluding even Gandhi himself, to look upon science as unwelcome. But Vinoba Bhave looks upon science as being conducive to the acceptance of non-violence as the guiding principle in human affairs. In one of his lectures, Vinoba Bhave distinguishes three stages in the development of society : the primitive barbarian society with its uncontrolled violence; organized civilized society with its controlled violence; and the modern contemporary world with its possibilities of absolute violence. Violence was effectively controlled and limited so long as man's technological abilities were not as highly developed as they are today. Non-violence, as a code of conduct, was regarded as a prescription for a few visionaries, but not as a real need. Today technology has conferred upon man the power of absolute violence, that is to say, weapons of destruction that could eliminate mankind itself. We are at the dead end of the process of compromising with violence. Here is a situation which demands a radical decision. Absolute violence is incapable of effective limitation; therefore man has to decide radically in favour of total abandonment of violence, and in favour of non-violence as the guiding principle of human affairs. What was so long regarded as an unrealistic ideology is now seen to be the demand of reality for the sake of human survival.

If you want to have violence, says Vinoba Bhave, well and good, but limit the progress of science. If, however, you want unimpeded progress of science, then you have to foster non-violence. Science has reached a stage of its development when any further alliance with violence would lead to its own destruction.

Consistent with his general attitude Vinoba Bhave does not regard man's self-knowledge as immutable. He condemns that type of spiritual thought which regards truth as known, without residue, which leaves no room for further explorations, and which sees no line of spiritual perfection that has not been realized. On the other hand, he would recommend to the protagonists of spiritual life an ever receding, unattained, but progressively attainable, ideal in the

manner of the scientist. He would like the spiritual seeker to get rid of self-complacency and face new possibilities of development and new lines of advance. It is his conviction that 'only a tiny portion of the possibilities of self-knowledge has been realized by mankind'. Therefore, like science, self-knowledge also has to grow far beyond what the ancients had realized.

I would illustrate this point by again referring to the concept of non-violence. In his *Gītā-pravacan*, Vinoba Bhave distinguishes four stages in the development of this notion. The first is typified by Paraśurāma who was himself a votary of non-violence but who nevertheless took to violence to destroy the class of Kṣatriyas. Paraśurāma's goal was not attained; he himself became a Kṣatriya. In the second stage, we hear of the sages who were apostles of non-violence, but who did not themselves resist violence; they invited Kṣatriyas to take to arms against the invading demons. Non-violence had not yet developed into a mode of resistance. In the next stage, the apostles of non-violence offered non-violent resistance to aggressors, and laid down their own lives; but the mode of non-violent resistance remained individualistic. Lastly, Gandhi used non-violent resistance as a mode of collective operation and widely extended its sphere of action, thereby proceeding one step further towards the elimination of the distinction between the secular and the spiritual.

Now, Vinoba Bhave is far from believing, for that reason, that we have witnessed the full development of the notion of non-violence. He is keenly aware that future ages would regard our experimentations as crude though important advances over those of our predecessors. No quality, it is one of Vinoba Bhave's cardinal beliefs, has been manifested wholly.

Take the correlated notion of *satyāgraha*. Vinoba Bhave does not think that the full implications of this notion have been realized.[13] The new developments in the technology of warfare have, in his opinion, thrown out a fresh challenge to the votary of non-violent resistance. We have today to discover the power, he says, which can counteract the destructive power of the atom. This power, he goes on to say, cannot be acquired by us so long as we are confined to the limits of mental consciousness. Like Aurobindo, Vinoba Bhave thinks it is only by transcending the plane of mental awareness that we can acquire the spiritual power which alone can counteract the

powers of destruction let loose by modern technological warfare.

Finally, Vinoba Bhave is led to the ideal of collective *samādhi*, which he recommends to all votaries of self-knowledge. 'The very expression "my *mokṣa*",' he says, "is a contradiction in terms".[14] In the same spirit, Aurobindo has preached the ideal of the liberation of all mankind. For Vinoba Bhave, this ideal has its roots not only in ancient self-knowledge, but also in the modern scientific attitude. Science, he believes, when applied to social affairs, breeds a certain collective spirit. Vinoba Bhave is not saying that science encourages collectivism of any particular variety, Marxian or other. But the scientific attitude does foster the spirit of cooperation and collective work. Quite apart from this issue, however, the collectivist ideal contains, as Aurobindo also recognizes, an element of spiritual truth: it reminds the individual of 'the necessity of unifying his life with that of others'.[15] A truly spiritual ideal, like an ideal social order, cannot but take into account this element of truth: it cannot build itself on the basis of man's separatist egoism, but it has to be based on the conception of his spiritual unity with his fellow beings.

A NEW SENSE OF VALUES

Vinoba Bhave arrives at a conception which very much resembles that of Aurobindo. As I have said, he suggests that we should always place before ourselves new or unattainable ideals of self-knowledge. Collective *samādhi* is one such ideal which he places before us and by it he means the ideal of collective liberation of mankind. This is an idea which we find in Aurobindo's idea of the spiritual transformaticn of the whole of mankind; and Vinoba Bhave admits that he has been greatly influenced by Aurobindo's thought. Individual liberation, he tells us, has been realized; but it is still left for us to strive after a collective ideal, the ideal of the transformation of the whole of mankind; and this, he says, is the spiritual ideal which self-knowledge can place before itself for further development.

Coming to Vinoba Bhave's social philosophy, here also he sees two aspects: one, the need for modern technology, the other, the need for self-knowledge and spirituality, and these two aspects have to be reconciled. With the coming of new technological advancements, he tells us, a new way of life and a new sense of values have to be cultivated. Unless we are cautious, he warns us, the power that has

been released from the atom may lead to the total disintegration of our life, and yet, with proper use, a new era of human happiness and progress could be ushered in. According to Vinoba Bhave's understanding of the situation, the future age should be one of decentralized social economic units based upon a sense of limitless fraternity. We observe today a continuously increasing economic dependence of one nation upon another, of villages on the cities, of one part of the world upon another. This growing dependence, interdependence, he tells us, is based upon the desire for pleasure and it has become so limitless that an Indian farmer needs foreign textiles and other consumer goods. While thus the desire for pleasure has disregarded all national frontiers, there is, however, no real feeling for humanity in the hearts of the people. People use imported goods, he writes, to gratify their desires and also to increase economic prosperity, but when it comes to the question of mankind at large, there are petty national vanities, local patriotisms, and parochialisms, which vitiate human feelings. Now this state of affairs leads to conflict. Economic interdependence, while of course eulogized as promoting international contact, really only serves national interests and promotes commercialism. There is the inevitable search for markets, with the vicious clash of interest that is so well known in history.

Now, what Vinoba Bhave recommends is a reversal of this situation. Let there be, he says, economic self-sufficiency on the part of small units but let our desire for pleasure be limited; let there be real and genuine feelings for humanity by getting rid of petty patriotisms and national vanities. Let us not look towards far-off countries to send us fashionable consumer goods, but let us breed a real feeling of pride in humanity itself. So he comes to a strange formula which he sums up in this way that we should limit our desires but universalize our thoughts, that we should have a sense of humanity, of the oneness of mankind; but so far as our desires are concerned, we should limit ourselves to our immediate environment—meaning by environment, of course, not mere nature but also the community to which we belong. This would avoid the clash of interests and increase universality of thought. In this way he thinks we can reconcile the needs of science and technology with the need of preserving spiritual values.

I have presented before you some of Vinoba Bhave's ideas. Some

of them, I know, are not quite systematized, but still I think they are worth consideration, for they are the ideas of one who is not merely a scholar. The first time I met him he said to me, 'Although you find me engaged in what is called *bhoodān*, which is supposed to be an economic programme, really, in my heart, I am engaged in a study of vedānta and I devote as much time to the study of the scriptures as to the work of *bhoodān*. If Gandhiji had lived, I would not have left my studies and come out to do this work.'

So here are the thoughts of a person who is not only a scholar but who also realizes the needs of the real circumstances in which mankind is placed. His ideas appeal to me particularly because of his very liberal attitude towards science. One of the faults of the traditional exponents of Gandhism is their anti-scientific attitude. Vinoba Bhave has rescued Gandhian thought from this. Of equal value is his belief that the possibilities of human development are limitless; that we cannot say at any stage that mankind has reached its final perfection, nor can we point to any human being and say that here is the ultimate, the last possibility of human development. Combining these two ideas, they generate a sort of liberalism which, it seems to me, is very valuable. Vinoba Bhave has, as I said, in many ways assimilated thought from contemporary Indian thinkers and in that way is a good representative of contemporary Indian thought.

NOTES

1. Vinoba Bhave, *Science and Self-knowledge*, collected, edited and translated into English by J.N. Mohanty, Varanasi, 1959.
2. Sri Aurobindo, *Evolution*, Arya Publishing House, Calcutta, 1933, p. 33.
3. In 'Chu Hsi's *Theory of Knowledge*', H.J.A.S., 1935, quoted by Needham in *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. II, p. 59.
4. Ibid., p. 90–91.
5. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 98.
6. Tagore, *Religion of Man*, p. 19.
7. Ibid., p. 115.
8. Ibid., Appendix II, p. 223.
9. Ibid., p. 37.

10. Evolution, p. 28.
11. *Science and Self-knowledge*, p. 12.
12. Ibid., p. 44.
13. Ibid., Chapter V: 'Satyagraha in the Scientific Age'.
14. Ibid., p. 37.
15. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, Sri Aurobindo Asram, Pondicherry, 1949, p. 267.

17
Vinoba's Gandhism: an Aspect

Since Vinoba's *bhoodān-yajña* movement captured the popular imagination as the most significant thing happening in post-Gandhi India, the question of the contrast between the two persons, Gandhi and Vinoba, and their ideologies has occupied many minds. While most Gandhian workers, including Gandhi's closest associates, agree that Vinoba is only carrying out the work left undone by the Master and that Vinoba's ideal as well as methods are faithful to the Master's own, while, that is to say, there is the large body of authoritative opinion that the mantle of Gandhi has fallen on Vinoba's shoulders, there are not a few who doubt and question. Is what Vinoba is doing in accord with the fundamental tenets of Gandhism? Is it proper that constructive workers should give up their *khādī* and *naī tālīm* work, and that all *en bloc* should take to *bhoodān*? The present author, for his part, has been able to convince himself that Vinoba is a true disciple of Gandhi; that the ideals of *bhoodān, sampattidān* and *grāmdān*, are consistent with the basic ideas of Gandhism: that the constructive programs of *khādī* and *naī tālīm* can prosper only on a soil prepared by *bhoodān*; and that at a time when constructive workers were about to lose the revolutionary urge and were settling down, after Gandhi's passing away, into their own narrow grooves of action, devoid of fervour and fire, filled with resignation and despair, Vinoba has awakened them. What St Paul was to Christ or, attempting a more recent comparison, what Vivekananda was to Śri Rāmakṛishna, Vinoba is to Gandhi. We shall not attempt, in this essay, to vindicate this conviction. On the other hand, searching for the contrast between the two personalities, one basic philosophical difference has come to light which this essay sets out to place on record, however tentatively.

Vinoba believes in evolution. Vinoba evolutionary philosophy has given a new form to Gandhi's experience of truth and non-violence. Gandhian thought exhibits two agents. The basic principles of truth and non-violence were founded on the deeply felt experiences of the Master. Gandhi never attempted a scientific philosophical orientation of these principles. On the other hand, in its economic, social and educational aspects, Gandhian thought is based on brilliant scientific analyses. The economics of *khādī*, the idea of a decentralized society and the philosophy of *naī tālīm* do not wait for a scientific founding; the Master himself has done that. It is the basic moral principles of truth and non-violence that Vinoba seeks to establish on a scientific-philosophical footing.

Both Gandhi and Vinoba believe that the law of existence is not a cruel struggle for survival; that man is not utterly egoistic by nature; that self-love is not the only motive working in human affairs. The very fact that society and family as cooperative endeavours subsist proves that self-love is mingled with self-sacrifice, egoism with altruism, struggle for survival with care for others. This curious mixture of good and evil that man is has never been lost sight of by Gandhi and Vinoba. They are not pessimists who struggle with despair before overwhelming gloom: they are not optimists who refuse to look squarely at the face of reality, unpalatable though it may be. They are 'practical idealists'.

The history of human society. Vinoba contends, is an interplay of the twin forces of self-love and self-sacrifice. That there is a surplus of self-sacrifice over self-love is the reason why the human species has survived. In fact, we may say that this surplus is the criterion of fitness for survival. The species that lacked this surplus died out; those that could exhibit some degree of cooperation and self-sacrifice proved fit to survive. Man's distinctive glory lies in his capacity for self-sacrifice. His progress lies in this direction, that is to say, in increasing this surplus of self-sacrifice over self-love. In existing society, the principle of self-sacrifice has a limited play; Vinoba's purpose is to allow it a larger operational field. Whether self-love can be totally eliminated from human affairs is a large theoretical question. But any extension of the sphere of self-sacrifice is a step in the right direction.

Understanding human affairs from this point of view gives a scientific basis to the idea of non-violent revolution. Non-violent

revolution which is based on love, does not bring into play a totally new force in human affairs. Love or self-sacrifice, as opposed to self-love, is already one of the determining principles, without which human society would not have been possible. What Gandhi and Vinoba aim at is to rescue this principle from the limited field open to it under the existing social framework and to allow it a gradually increasing sway.

It is sheer dogma, Vinoba would say, to maintain that human nature is basically unchangeable; that the proportion of good and evil is once for ever settled; that what is possible at most is good patchwork but no inner and fundamental change. On the other hand, for Vinoba, the history of mankind shows ample evidence for such inner change. The revolutionary ideas that have gradually come to be accepted in all human affairs, economic, social, pedagogic, regarding marriage, family and property, all these point to a slow but certain change. Vinoba is no revivalist; he is not one who mourns over all that is gone. He recognizes the humanism that underlies modern ideas of democracy and socialism. The non-violent revolutionary is to take note of these trends in human affairs. He is to realize that the winds are in his favour; that humanity is trying to achieve his ideals; that mankind can survive only if it decides to move according to his direction; that, ultimately, mankind must take the decision.

To the idea of evolution, Vinoba adds the ideas of inevitability. Establishment of a non-violent society is not only desirable, but also inevitable. Again, history shows the truth. Primitive man took to disorganized individual violence; this did not work. Disorganized violence was then brought under control by organized individual violence called the 'state'; this worked well within limits. Now that weapons capable of total destruction of mankind have been placed in human hands, organized violence threatens to exceed the limits within which it had proved tolerably efficacious. Any attempt to put effective limits on this possibility of unlimited violence is futile. What is needed is a total rejection of violence as a principle in human affairs. The possibility of a total elimination of human existence that the weapons of violence hold out is, according to Vinoba, a demonstration of the inner absurdity of the principle of violence through a dialectical movement as it were: primitive disorganized violence controlled by limited but organized violence, and this latter

again exceeding limits that refuse to be effectively imposed. But the total elimination of mankind is not feasible, for man's urge for self-preservation as well as for self-expression will lead him along the right path, and the catastrophe will be avoided. With this analysis, Vinoba seeks to demonstrate that history is in favour of non-violent revolution, that the Gandhian and the *bhoodān* workers are not fighting against, but are rather cooperating with, the *zeitgeist* for leading mankind ahead.

No quality, Vinoba writes in his *Gītā-pravacan*—and this is what has been called here his evolutionary outlook—has been manifested in its perfection. There is infinite scope for manifestation. Truth cannot be apprehended in its entirety either by an individual or by an age. With the progress of history, ever new aspects of truth are being revealed. This holds good also of such immutable moral principles as non-violence. Perfect manifestation of the meaning and potentialities of non-violence is yet to come. The ancient seers had attained to an intuitive grasp of the truth; but the endless possibilities hidden therein were not revealed to them instantaneously. Ages of human experience and experiment were required to draw out those potentialities. One cannot say that the same immutable truth is *only* being applied to ever new areas; application is not external to the apprehension of truth, but constantly enriches our understanding. New application brings fresh understanding. Our application, and also understanding, of non-violence are being enriched. This line of progress will be continued into the future. The future generations, more adept in self-sacrifice and non-violence, will consider our present attempts meagre. The faults that escape our own notice will be clear to them. They will improve upon us. But, nevertheless, the fact remains that although the development at each stage is imperfect, yet it is an indispensable foundation of future progress. And, besides, the experiences and realizations of each age are suited to the circumstances that prevailed and conditioned understanding.

Realization of this endless possibility of perfecting our understanding and experience, and looking at our present endeavours, however noble, in the larger canvas of the march of humanity from an immeasurable past to an incalculable future, give us a sense of humility, and the satisfaction of being humble participants, like the squirrel in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, in that great adventure.

18
Gandhi's Concept of Man

Gandhi's concept of man is no doubt unmistakably coloured by his religious ideas. In his religious philosophy, Gandhi is in one respect very much orthodox and almost a traditionalist. He believes in the authority of the Hindu scriptures and in the *Varnashram dharma* (he even regarded *varṇa* as hereditary), accepts cow-protection as an inalienable duty, believes in rebirth and, as he puts it, does not disbelieve in idol-worship.[1] Further in accordance with the Vedāntic tradition, he believes in the unity of all existence, in the oneness of *Ātman*, in the goal of self-realization to be achieved through an arduous process of restraint, discipline and purification—through which the chain of rebirth would be snapped.[2]

However in order to go deeper into Gandhi's thoughts about the nature and destiny of man, we have to take hold of some of his other thoughts—many of which are not as orthodox as those just mentioned, and to bring out their philosophical import. These thoughts are not systematically presented, but they are there. We may at first single them out before, at the end trying to ascertain the total view of man that emerges.

I. GANDHI'S CONCEPTION OF TRUTH

A. In a celebrated passage, Gandhi admits that though he started by saying that God is truth, he has gone beyond it and has come to hold instead that Truth is God.[3] The reason for this change is that the objective validity of the concept of God may be doubted and even denied, but the objective validity of the concept of Truth cannot be. Even an atheist will concede that there is truth. Scepticism regarding truth defeats itself. Truth defined as that which cannot be doubted or denied is precisely the God which Gandhi recognizes;

With this, he seeks to place the concept of God beyond all controversy. It is in such Truth that human existence is inalienably grounded, and this groundedness persists even when man alienates himself from that basis of his existence.

What could Gandhi have meant by saying that no one, not even the atheist, could deny truth? He of course wants to embarrass the atheist by telling him that he was a truth-fearing man and so also a God-fearing man.[4] What did he mean by this apparent piece of sophistry? I think, he means to assert the following propositions:

1. that whatever the sceptic may want to assert, he will be asserting what he believes to be true;
2. that though people may differ as to what is *the* truth, there surely is no difference of opinion as to what 'truth' *means*;[5]
3. that the Truth—whatever that may be has infinite aspects, it is *anekānta*,[6] so that even the atheist is right, *from his own point of view*, in denying the existence of God.[7]

Now I think these three are philosophically quite plausible propositions. As against (2) it may be argued that there are in fact various meanings of 'truth' as is shown by the existence of various philosophical theories of truth. To this I would reply that though the various philosophical theories of truth do give different accounts of the nature of truth and so in a sense of the meaning of 'truth' there is a common pre-philosophical, pre-reflective understanding of 'truth' which in fact is the explicandum for the philosophers, and to that extent there is a point of agreement between them.

B. Why have I attributed to Gandhi the view that human existence is grounded in truth? And what is the significance of this view? Gandhi came to identify truth with Law[8] and to hold that nothing in the universe could be independent of the Law. But this Law which holds all things together can only be a cohesive force without which the universe 'would crumble to pieces and we cease to exist.'[9] Love means precisely this cohesive force as pertaining to animate beings.[10] 'Where there is life is love. Hatred leads to destruction.' Nature 'lives by attraction'. Love is either self-love or love for others. But man cannot live by self-love alone. In fact, 'Self-love *compels* regard for others.'[11] Ordered society would not have been possible without such a necessary law. From such arguments as these, it would seem to follow that although it may be true to hold,

given Gandhi's premises (4) that though all universe is grounded in that Law which is the Truth, (5) human existence is rooted in that Law conceived as Love and not merely as mechanical necessity, and (6) man is also aware, however dimly, of being so rooted; for love is not love unless there is awareness, however obscure, of it.

It may be noted that whereas the first set of propositions 1-3 are on an ontologically non-committed plane and derive their plausibility from this, the second set of propositions 4-6 are ontologically committed and, in so far, are much less beyond controversy. For these propositions may be challenged (i) by those who do not share a realistic conception of natural law; (ii) by those who are willing to accept a realistic conception of laws but not a monistic notion of *the Law*; and also (iii) by those who suspect the move to pass over from the conception of Law to that of Love. A defence of Gandhi's thought, if it has to be undertaken, has to meet three sorts of opposition.

C. After having shown that Truth cannot be either denied or doubted, and further after having shown that the universe is grounded in Truth understood as Law while human existence is grounded in Truth understood as Love, Gandhi proceeds to maintain that man nevertheless alienates himself from this basis of his existence. Our thoughts, feelings and actions are not in accordance with this basis. But this alienation can never amount to total severance. Life cannot persist without love; and yet we do not always succeed in moulding our lives in accordance with it. The goal of human existence is the overcoming of this alienation. *Ahiṁsā* is the means for the achievement of this end.

D. To be able to shape one's life in accordance with truth, one must know the truth. But the truth in the sense of that ultimate truth whose different aspects are the truths in the plural, is inconceivable as much as it is undeniable. We do not know the absolute Truth. Gandhi does not claim that he knew it,[12] though he says that his faith in it is so strong that this faith amounts to experience and also that he has made the world's faith in it his own.[13] What then are we to do in the absence of a knowledge of the Truth? Gandhi distinguishess between absolute truth and relative truth, and says that so long as one does not know the former the latter should be the guide. The relative truth is 'what the voice within tells you'[14] which is surely different from person to person, for 'the evolution

of the human mind is not the same for all'.[15] Now this might seem to be subjectivism. But I think Gandhi does have an important point to make. After all he is here concerned with truth in the context of human situations demanding decision. And in a human situation after one has taken all objective factors into consideration, after one has weighed all evidences bearing upon the issue, one has to choose after all that which appears to him to be right. This element of subjectivity seems to be a necessary element in human choice. I can choose only that which seems *to me* to be right, though in order to decide what is right I may both consider all objective evidence available to me and cultivate my own powers of judgement and moral sense. Relative truth, for me then, is what seems to me to be the truth, and I have to conform to that in thought and action. So long as I do not know the absolute truth, this is an indispensable guide—but only as subject to two conditions. First, a votary of truth must keep his mind open to correct himself should the occasion arise. Second, one should undergo the appropriate self-discipline which more and more lessens the interference of the subjectivity factor and lessens the gap between relative truth and absolute truth. This is what Gandhi means when he says: 'If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of truth you must reduce yourself to a zero.'[16] To reduce oneself to zero means to make oneself receptive to truth by cultivating humility and what the ancient philosophers called '*cittasuddhi*'. We may indeed distinguish between two different attitudes towards truth: the attitude which expresses itself in the spontaneity of thought, in the constructions of theories and models, and in gradual approximation of one's constructions towards truth: and the attitude which expresses itself in total receptivity, in gradual elimination of theoretical constuctions, in purifying the mind—as one cleanses a mirror—so that it may reflect truth. Gandhi's attitude is the second one.

II. BODY, EVIL, FREEDOM AND MORAL LAW

We thus have the picture of man as a being whose existence is rooted in Truth, whose existence is made possible by this Truth as Love, who is nevertheless alienated from it though not wholly severed, and whose destiny is to realize that truth first through making his relative awareness of truth his guide but also by purifying the mind and heart through self-discipline and humility.

But human existence is limited by two features. First, man has a body. Secondly, man is subject to the limitations of a society, a historical context, a community, a religion into which he is born, which he does not however choose for himself. Let us now see how Gandhi looks at these features of concrete human existence.

A. Gandhi is unaffected by the modern awareness of the essential subjectivity of body as illustrated in the writings of K.C. Bhattacharyya and the European existentialists. His attitude towards the body is that of the orthodox man of religion and moralist. Here again two different attitudes towards the body are possible. One may look upon the body as the source of evil, the root of suffering, as the cause of one's distorted vision, and may recommend for spiritual life the goal of freedom from the fetters of the body for which the path would be one of austere self-discipline. Or one may while recognizing the imperfections which the body normally confers upon the spirit nevertheless set before spiritual life the goal of transforming the body into an appropriate instrument of spiritual existence. We find the former attitude in the greater part of the tradition. A very illustrious example of the latter is to be found in Sri Aurobindo. What precisely is Gandhi's attitude towards the body?

In his commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, Gandhi says that the body is 'born in sin' and becomes 'the seed-bed of sin'. He calls it the field of Kuru, the *Kurukṣetra*. But this field is the field of battle between the good and the evil. And so the body, though originating in sin, is yet 'capable of being turned into the gateway of Freedom'.[17] This passage alone shows Gandhi's oscillation between the two attitudes. On the one hand, in the true Christian spirit he speaks of crucification and mortification of the flesh, but he also regards such mortification as a sin 'when the flesh has come under subjection and can be used as an instrument of service', and recognizes that 'there is no inherent merit in mortification of the flesh.'[18] 'the human body is meant solely for service, never for indulgence.'[19]

B. Gandhi recognized the fact of evil. Two mutually opposed charges are raised against him: that he was a pessimist who saw only the evil side of life, and that he was an optimist who believed in the innate goodness of life. I should think both are partial views of Gandhi who actually looked upon man as a battlefield of the two opposed forces of good and evil, of selfishness and self-sacrifice, of self-love and other-love, and who sought to expand the domain

of the good, of the spirit of self-sacrifice, of other-love. He painfully recognizes the presence of sin and evil and violence. He also admits that it is not possible, while in bodily existence, to completely eliminate violence. Yet he also adds that man has been heading progressively towards *ahiṁsā*,[20] that the history of mankind shows signs of diminishing *hiṁsā*: a remark which gives lie to the commonly made comment that Gandhi's thought was out and out unhistorical and that he wanted mankind to return to a *Rāmarājya* of a bygone age.

Evil he admits as a fact, and confesses his inability to explain by any rational method. 'To want to do so is to be coequal with God. I am therefore humble enough to recognize evil as such. And I call God long suffering and patient precisely because he permits evil in the world.'[21] One understands this admission of the incomprehensibility of the presence of evil in a world supposed to be God's creation. One understands the candid and perfectly logical admission that God must be responsible as much for evil as for good, and one may leave the matter there. But look at Gandhi's own rationalization of evil when he insisted that the Bihar earthquake of 1934 came to India as a chastisement for our sin of untouchability: such calamities may not be caprices of nature, but once you admit the rational incomprehensibility of evil you cannot at the same time find reasons however plausible they may be![22]

C. Gandhi is as much aware of the universality and oneness of the spirit in man as of the peculiar limitations to which each individual is subjected. Some of these limitations he accepts almost as inevitable under human conditions, and wants us to do our best within them. I would discuss the consequences for Gandhi's thought of this awareness of the human situation.

First, his attitude towards *varṇa*. The law of *varṇa*, according to Gandhi, follows from certain limitations with which every person is born—limitations which he cannot overcome. He regards it as an immutable law of nature.[23] Be it noted that the distinctions of *varṇa*, for Gandhi, admit of no distinctions of high and low, it is altogether different from the present caste system. Now I will not ask, whether Gandhi's interpretation of the *varṇa* as hereditary, as what is given by birth and cannot be changed by choice[24] is faithful to the original intentions of the scriptures. I shall not also ask if as a social ideal it is acceptable. I only want to draw attention to

Gandhi's awareness of the peculiar limitations to which each person is subject by birth—the limitations which he can neither choose nor overcome and within which he should preferably make the best use of the opportunities available.

The second sort of limitation which characterizes the human situation and which Gandhi advises us to respect is that which is provided by the cultural tradition and the community into which each of us is born. This accounts for the fact that in spite of his universal humanism, Gandhi glorified that cult of *swadeshi*. It is not necessary for me to expound here the thesis that the concept of *swadeshi* forms one of the corner stones of the edifice of Gandhian thought. Believing though in the unity of all nature and all men, Gandhi did not yet recommend the pursuit of that undifferentiated unity. There are on the contrary local variations, environmental differences, traditional patterns that, superimposed on that unity, lend it colour and contrast. Gandhi formulates the principle of *swadeshi* thus:

> 'Swadeshi is that spirit within us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote.'[25]

This is for Gandhi not narrow parochialism but both a consequence of man's unavoidable obligation to the community into which he is born and yet compatible with the noblest sort of internationalism.

It is easy to show how this principle of *swadeshi* determines to a very great extent Gandhi's religious persuasion and his political and economic thought. Applied to religion, it leads to restricting oneself to the ancestral religion but does not imply accepting all that has been handed down. Change, if necessary, should be *from within* and not imposed *ab extra*. Applied to politics, it leads to the use of indigenous institutions which, if necessary, may be modified *from within* and made more suited to the needs of the time. Applied to economics, the principle recommends using those things which are produced by one's immediate neighbours in preference to those produced in remote countries. The means of production may be made more efficient but hand-spun cloth, produced by one's own village women is to be preferred to high quality imported textile. Applied to education, one should learn through the medium of one's own mother tongue, and teaching of natural and social sciences

is to be done through observation and reflection upon one's own natural and human environment.

Men seek universality by rejecting the particularities of one's own culture. This is not Gandhi's way. Remaining within the tradition, seeking to change it from within, he yet succeeded in achieving universality. He sought the universal in the particular, the concrete, not the abstract universal.

D. Is Gandhi an utilitarian or a pragmatist of some sort? Surely, he says: 'If any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpracticable it must be pronounced to be a failure.'[26] Further: 'In judging the actions of men, we should always apply the test, whether it conduces to the welfare of the world or not.'[27] But from such statements as these it would be wrong to infer that Gandhi's attitudes towards morality and religion are pragmatic.[28] Unlike the pragmatist, he believed in absolute and immutable moral laws. 'A life of goodness is enjoined upon us, not because it will bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of Nature.'[29] Virtue, in fact, is its own reward. The moral worth of an action should be judged not by its consequences but by the motive of the agent, the moral intention. In a true Kantian vein, he writes: 'That man alone is truly virtuous who follows right 'because right is right.'[30] He of course seeks to combine this Kantian strain with what may appear to be, but really is not, utilitarianism. 'The highest moral law is... that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind.'[31] He is not saying that the moral value lies only in the greatest pleasure of the whole mankind. He is not reducing moral goodness to any other notion. What he is saying is that the one thing which possesses the highest moral worth as an end is the greatest good of mankind (not of the greatest number).

III. SOME GENERAL REMARKS

To sum up then: Man, for Gandhi, is firmly rooted in truth, and though he seems to be alienated from it there is never complete severance for it is truth as love which sustains human life, individual and corporate. The supreme duty for man is *satyāgraha*, following the lead of truth, even if of relative truth i.e. of what seems to be true to one's best judgement. The progress from relative truth to absolute truth is a long and arduous journey requiring austere self-

discipline and practice of *ahiṁsā*. But human efforts are limited by two circumstances: body and socio-historical existence. Each, at first a chain of bondage, may be turned into a gateway to freedom. The body imposes the duty of service, social existence imposes the duty of *swadeshi*. Both lead to that concrete universality of spirit which is not incompatible with emphasis on the particular and the temporal.

Gandhi's concept of man oscillates between the Christian and the Vedāntic, between the awareness of man's imperfections, depravity, finiteness and sinful nature, and the promise of his perfectibility through self-discipline. His consciousness of sin persisted, but under the influence of the Vedāntic tradition, it never became an obsession. He wrote in the *Harijan* of 18.4.36: 'I have made the frankest admission of my many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders.' Suffering continued to have, in his eyes, a spiritual value. The image of Christ crucified, as he confesses, profoundly touched him, and this is what he comments: 'Joy comes not out of infliction of pain on other but out of pain voluntarily borne by oneself.'[32]

His concept of man is characterized also by another oscillation: namely, that between a strict dualism between body and spirit and a position which overcomes this dualism. It is true, as has been indicated earlier, that he looked upon the body both as a prison house and a gateway to freedom. But he never came to the notion of body as a form of the spirit. I do not want to say that this is a defect in his thought. I want to insist on this point in order to throw some light on one of his most favourite conceptions, the conception of bread-labour. As is well known, according to the law of bread-labour, every one should perform physical labour which is at least enough for his daily bread. Now though I consider this law as of great importance I do not want to argue out its case for the present. I want to draw attention rather to the nature of the conception. To the question, 'May not a man earn his bread by intellectual labour?' Gandhi answered in the negative and said: 'The needs of the body must be supplied by the body.... Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour is for the soul...'[33] It seems, Gandhi is recommending that maintenance of the body should be left to bodily work, and intellectual work should be for the sake of the mind and should not be used for supporting the body. 'Render unto Caeser that which is Caeser's.' This is a clear cut mind-body dualism.

The reason why I wish to draw attention to this is not that I want to find fault with the bread-labour theory but that there is another way of so understanding the theory that the theory is freed from this dualistic basis. And I believe, this way of understanding the theory is not inconsistent with Gandhian thought. Physical productive labour of course leads to production of economic good, and earns daily bread, but this act of producing economic good, it may be said, is not a merely physical act meant for sustaining the body regarded as a physical organism but is a spiritual activity meant to enhance one's total spiritual well being. Man, some people have said, is an economic animal, one who produces value through labour. The phenomenon of value-producing labour is one of man's essential spiritual functions. The economic activity may be regarded as a species of, and the most fundamental form of spiritual activity. If this be so, one may understand and defend the bread-labour theory without having to appeal to a dualistic ontology. And this way of looking at the economic is perfectly consistent with the Gandhian point of view.

Some of Gandhi's critics have said something like this: "He confused the economic with the spiritual. Look at the way he made a fetish of the spinning wheel! Why did he not let the economic follow its own law, and concern himself only with matters of the spirit? And yet, does he not make the spinning wheel, a means of producing material good—and even a very antiquated one at that—the basis of what he intends to be a culture based on spiritual values?"

The criticism overlooks, amongst others, the fact that from the distinctively Gandhian point of view there is no line of demarcation between man's economic and cultural pursuits. An inner affinity and also an essential difference with Marx may be noted here. If Marxism—at least the writings of the later Marx—by assimilating culture to the economic was 'levelling down', Gandhi by assimilating the economic to culture was 'levelling up'. If with Marxism culture loses its so called purity and becomes a mere superstructure, with Gandhi the economic loses its mere utility value and its materiality and becomes a basic spiritual phenomenon. Culture ceases to be either a superstructure (Marx) or a mere surplus (idealist), but becomes continuous with life' needs. From this point of view, we get a more integral understanding of Gandhi's philosophy of man.

NOTES

1. Gandhi, M.K. *My Religion*, edited by B. Kumarappa, Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1955 (to be referred to as MR), 159.
2. For example, see MR, 44.
3. MR, 40.
4. MR, 40.
5. MR, 40.
6. Gandhi, M.K. *Truth is God*, edited by P.K. Prabhu, Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1955 (to be henceforth referred to as TG), 11–12.
7. MR, 40.
8. TG, 7.
9. Ibid., p. 17.
10. Ibid., p. 17.
11. Ibid., p. 17.
12. MR, 42.
13. TG, 4.
14. MR, 41.
15. MR, 41.
16. MR, 42.
17. Desai, M. *The Gita according to Gandhi*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1946, 135.
18. MR, 88.
19. MR, 54.
20. MR, 61.
21. MR, 36.
22. TG, 23–24.
23. Gandhi, M.K. *Sarvodaya*, edited by B. Kumarappa, Ahmedabad.
24. MR, 148.
25.
26. Bose, N.K., ed., *Selections from Gandhi*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 224.
27. Gandhi, *Mahatma. Ethical Religion*, Madras: Ganesan, 63.
28. Contrast K. Ramakrishna Rao, *Gandhi and Pragmatism*, Oxford & IBH, 1968.
29. *Ethical Religion*, 4.
30. Ibid., p. 11.
31. Ibid., p. 7.
32. MR, 26.
33. TG, 135.

19

Remarks on Raja Rammohan Roy's Religious Thought

Raja Rammohan Roy is undoubtedly a pioneer in the comparative study of religions. Three different types of comparativists seem to have been prevalent in the age when Raja Rammohan Roy began his studies. First, there were those, belonging to each religion, who were fundamentally ignorant of the other religions and yet claimed absoluteness (and not merely uniqueness) for their own faith. There were others who, under the influence of the developing sciences, advocated either an agnostic attitude towards religion, or simply denied the validity of any religion altogether. But there were also those who sought to reconcile their perfunctory knowledge of other religions with faith in the final superiority of their own by postulating a graded series of evolving religious conceptions at the apex of which, they claimed, stood their own favored faith. It is to the lasting credit of Raja Rammohan Roy that already by the second decade of the nineteenth century he had sought to overcome these three prevalent attitudes, and by enquiring into the 'essence' of the various religions, was aiming at rendering religion, as he writes in his 'First Appeal to the Christian Public', 'destructive of differences and dislike between man and man, and conducive to the peace and union of mankind'.[1] In this search for the universal essence of all religions, he is preceded by the visionary Moghul emperor Akbar, and succeeded by a whole line of liberal Hindu thinkers.

I believe that such a universal essence, common to all religions, may possibly be extracted, although I do not believe that this essence goes exactly where Raja Rammohan Roy locates it—namely, in the belief in the existence of an Eternal Being who governs the whole Universe with this wisdom.[2] If only one considers the so-called atheistic religions (e.g. Buddhism and Jainism) and the many 'pre-

literate' religions, one easily realizes that in order to be a religion, a system of faith need not include belief in one Eternal Being who governs the universe with his wisdom. It is not, however, my purpose in this essay to refute the Raja—but only to suggest another alternate approach to the philosophical study of religions—an approach which, so it seems to me, is eqally well likely to contribute towards the goal of reducing differences between man and man.

But before I do that, it is worthwhile to recall one major conceptual tool which the Raja utilizes in his major work *Tuhfatal Muwahhiddin*. This is the distinction between 'nature' and 'habit', between what is 'a natural tendency in human beings and is common to all individuals of mankind equally'.[3] It is in accordance with this distinction that he proceeds to maintain that every individual, without instruction or guidance of any one, simply through insight into and observation of nature 'has an innate faculty in him by which he can infer that there exists a Being who (with His wisdom) governs the whole Universe'[4] while most of the other beliefs constituting a religion, i.e. belief in its 'dogmas', miracles and social customs, are results of 'habit' and 'special training'. Belief in God is thus 'natural' to man, 'indispensable for man'—not in the sense that every man has it, but in the sense that every man can reach it only if he exercises a faculty innate to him. Belief in myths, miracles, dogmas and special revelation are not natural to man they are induced and cultivated. The Raja even speaks of a 'natural inspiration from God' and contrasts it with the 'invented revelation of mankind',[5] and wishes to do away with the necessity of an intermediate agency for guidance to salvation[6], the instrumentality of prophets or revelation.[7] It is surprising how much he is under the influence of the rationalistic doctrine of innate ideas, of the Cartesian distinction between innate and adventitious ideas—and how little the Lockean criticism of those distinctions or even the Kantian version of the a priori reached him. The importance he assigns to 'habit' is certainly Humean, but, again, what we find is a curious combination of pre-Kantian rationalism ('innate faculty') and Humean empiricism ('habit').

This conceptual tool, with its correlative distincton between 'essence' and 'accident' is applied by Raja Rammohan Roy with great vigor and persuasive effect to Hinduism as it was practised in his own time. In general, one could say of Hinduism that it, in

actual historical practice, has consisted of three different strata of beliefs (and corresponding practices): a set of metaphysical beliefs (as laid down in the *Upaniṣads*, chief of which are belief in the universality of the self or *ātman*, belief in the law of *karma*, and belief in the possibility of *mokṣa* or liberation from the bondage of *karma*), a set of religious (in the narrow sense) beliefs (beliefs in deities and associated myths, as embodied in the *Purāṇas*), and, last of all, belief in a set of social rules (as codified in the *Dharmaśāstras*).

These three levels did not remain, in course of the historical development of Hindu religious thought, completely isolated from each other. On the contrary, theoreticians of orthodoxy sought to build theoretical bridges between them, just as liturgist and ritualistic theologians introduced practices which were meant to connect the three. Thus, apart from the social injunction and prohibitions, there grew up a whole set of religious rituals and modes of worship corresponding to each deity and its mythology. In fact, the two sets of practices often intermingled and were undistinguished.

Now, a social reformer as he was over and above being a religious thinker, Raja Rammohan Roy's criticism of Hinduism was directed against the second and the third of its components. He wanted to retain only the first and whatever religious beliefs and practices (e.g. modes of worship) were to follow from it, and to purge Hinduism of all myths, beliefs in innumerable deities, and associated idolatry, and social and ritualistic practices. In his criticism, he often treated all these together: belief in deities, myths, idolatry and associated practices. Against idolatry for example, he writes that it is 'destructive of the comforts of life', 'injurious to the texture of society' by imposing 'modes and restraints of diet' which separate the Hindus from the rest of the world as much as from each other. But, it may be said, that such things as modes and restraints of diet are imposed not by idolatry but by the social rules, injunctions and prohibitions, which has been earlier said to constitute the third stratum within Hinduism. It is not, then, so much idolatry as the said social practices which are injurious to society and mankind—if at all.

Furthermore, distinction should be made between myths and idolatry which came to be associated with them. Raja Rammohan Roy does recognize that idol worship has a limited validity, and that it is not absolutely useless but 'is valid until he (the worshipper) becomes conscious that God dwells in all beings.'[8] It should than

be understood that worship of idols is injurious only when it is accorded unlimited validity; but if and when its limitations are recognized it may not be so. Raja Rammohan Roy also shows a correct understanding of what I have called the second component of Hinduism, when he recognizes that even in worshipping idols, the Hindus do not consider them objects of worship until they have performed *prāṇapratisthā* or 'communication of divine life'—which suggests that *at its best* idol worship is not worship of a body (a stone or metal) separately from spirit.[9] It follows that there is good idolatry and bad idolatry, and it is the latter that is spiritually ruinous, not the former—for the former knows its limitations, especially when it wants to be consistent with that ubiquitousness of divine spirit which Hinduism believes in. Most of Raja Rammohan Roy's criticism are directed against the latter.

Idolatry can at best be regarded as a concrete representation of myths. Today, thanks to the sympathetic and insightful researches of investigators like Mircea Eliade and Paul Ricoeur, we have a more generous understanding of myths and of their role in human life in general and religious life in particular. It is here, therefore, that we need to go beyond the Raja's point of view most certainly. He considers the mythologies as 'stories of immorality and vice'[10]; actions are ascribed to Krishna, for example, which consist in 'a continued series of debauchery, sensuality, falsehood, ingratitude, breach of truth, and treachery to friends'.[11] The sight of the images may not even be aesthetically pleasing, and some even 'excite disgust in the mind of the spectator'.[12] In 'The Precepts of Jesus', he wants to separate the moral sayings of Christ from 'the mysterious dogmas and historical parts of the New testament'.[13] The miracles are 'extravagant tales',[14] which are introduced for increasing the faith of the common people.[15]

Now, to be brief, I wish to make the following points as regards this understanding of religious myths. First, Raja Rammohan Roy is right as against his opponents criticizing the decadent Hindu orthodoxy, which certainly had lost sight of the original significance of myths and treated them as real histories enacted in this world at another time or in another world conceived as an extension of this. This realistic concept of deities and literal, non-symbolic understanding of myths degenerates into profanity. However, the Raja is wrong in that he does not see *the symbolic function of the myths* as

pointing to the complexities of man's relationship to others, the world, the Divine, and also to the psychic depths and potentialities of his own being.

Returning to the Raja's conceptual tool referred to earlier in this essay, one must say that myths are *not* 'excrescent qualities', accidental features accruing to the religions by historical circumstances and commanding faith only through 'habit and training', but essential features of any religion *quâ* religion. A religion cannot consist of mere metaphysical beliefs; the experience of the sacred has to be symbolic, it is not all transparent; and these symbols pointing to the dark, unknown frontiers of human existence, are the myths. That myths are not mere accidental features of a religion is borne out by the fact that in spite of the wide variety of myths in different religions, they show certain common patterns—which point to common, universal, existential situations of man.

Of the three strata of Hindu religion, then, the first, the metaphysical, is supra-historical, but so also are the myths. It is idolatry and the social morality that have developed through history. Regarding idolatry, one may distinguish between good idolatry which recognizes its own provisional status, and bad idolatry which arrogates itself to the status of an absolutely valid religious attitude. Amongst social rules, again, one needs likewise to distinguish between those that never had any historical justification (e.g. *sattee* which the Raja so vehemently fought, to his lasting credit), those (like the *varṇāśrama* system) which in its original conception was meant to fulfill a genuine socio-economic function but in its present decadent and degenerate form has outgrown that role and so needs to be exorcized, and those if any, which retain some value in conferring order and stability on Hindu society. It is in the light of a detailed study of these that we may seek to appropriate what is of value in the Raja's critique of Hinduism.

It is time now to conclude these brief reflections by returning to a suggestion I made towards the beginning. The Raja, and following him a long line of liberal Hindu thinkers, have sought to resolve human conflict, or at least one aspect of it, by going back to the *essence* of religion, by which is meant the common, universally present features shared by all religions. As said earlier, I believe that there are such features, only that belief in a creator Godhead does not belong to this essence. Furthermore, a mythical representa-

tion of some sort or other may be a part of the essence of religion. What is, however, important for my present purpose is this: the supposed essence by itself cannot be a religion. The essence of all religions is not, and cannot be *a* religion (just as the essence of man is not a man). The idea of a universal religion acceptable to all is then misleading and destined to fail. There have to be alternate religions. (This alternation, 'either-or', is not cancelled by the fact that the religions share certain common features so that they all are geometries. But these common features do not serve to constitute another universal geometry.)

One way to counteract the dangers of religious absolutism and therefore fanaticism is to emphasize their commonness. To try to found another religion on this commonality is an error. Another way to overcome religious fanaticism is to recognize an ultimate *alternation* in religious life, an alternation which excludes any claim to *absoluteness* but is compatible with claims to *uniqueness*. Recognition of, and respect for, other possibilities, and other worlds, may well provide the basis for inter-religious harmony.

NOTES

1. Raja Rammohan Roy, *English Works*, Allahabad: The Panini Office, 1906, p. 564.
2. Ibid., p. 948.
3. Ibid., Introduction to *Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin*.
4. Ibid., p. 948.
5. Ibid., p. 957.
6. Ibid., p. 953.
7. Ibid., p. 953.
8. Ibid., p. 207.
9. Ibid., p. 173.
10. Ibid., p. 118f.
11. Ibid., p. 112.
12. Ibid., p. 118.
13. Ibid., p. 548.
14. Ibid., p. 614.
15. Ibid., p. 949.

PART III
Encounters: Phenomenology and Philosophy, India and the West

20

On Interpreting Indian Philosophy Some Problems and Concerns

The remarks I am going to make are as much thematic as autobiographical. The thematic points are made in the context of my life-long experience thinking about Indian philosophy over four decades and across three continents.

TWO ATTITUDES

As a graduate student in philosophy and mathematics at Göttingen in the early fifties, I joined Ernst Waldschmidt's seminar on *Ṛg Veda*, and, as was unavoidable for a philosophy student, I raised philosophical questions (formulated at that time largely under the influence of Sri Aurobindo's *Secrets of the Vedas*). Waldschmidt would not entertain them. He was a philologist. In his seminars, I learned German philological work at its best. He would not even let us use Sāyana's commentary to translate the hymns. Sāyana is nearer to us than to the hymns—he used to remind us. There were dictionaries, from Yāska's down to Röth-Böthlingk, and the Vedic grammars. The methodological idea was: if we found a torn fragment of a manuscript in Central Asia, we could use all the resources to translate it, interpret it and situate it in space and time. I marvelled at the way he would make us work to skip over the great divide of time and to enter into the words of the text and their interstices. The tradition of Vedic scholarship as it is developed in India was of no use. The only relevant tradition was that of German and (possibly) French Indology. Indology was a European discipline with its own history and its own canons.

Fifteen years later, I happened to be the chairman of the philosophy department of the Graduate school of the University of Calcutta. A very distinguished scholar of Indian philosophy, a former teacher and incumbent of the chair I held then, entered my

office one afternoon as I finished instructing a visiting American scholar on some Nyāya texts. This venerable Indian scholar made no secret of his disapproval of my teaching the *darśanas* to those who had not taken the trouble of learning Sanskrit, and who did not practice the traditional Hindu mode of living—mode of living and mode of thinking being integral parts of one continuum.

THE CLASSICAL PANDIT AND WE

The Pandit lived the life of a Brahmin, abided by the rules of caste, observed the religious practices as enjoined in the text the community followed, dressed as Hindus of yore, studied and taught squatting on a mattress, participated in disputations, but also purifying rites and celebrations. Philosophizing was continuous with a mode of living.

This seamless continuity, however, has been broken. The Pandit with whom I studied, while teaching Nyāya in the hallowed halls of the Calcutta Sanskrit College, smoked cigarettes and sipped cups of tea. In his philosophical thinking, he would even say that possibly on some matter an old master might have been wrong. How could a Brahmin Pandit say so—asked the venerable teacher I referred to earlier? I humbly reminded him of the great Raghunātha who dared to change the entire system of Nyāya *Padārthas*.

The issue was for us, as we grew up in Calcutta and studied in the Sanskrit College: we had already broken with the mode of living, we had taken to thinking and writing in English, with one foot in another alien tradition, with our mooring in the tradition loosened, were we entitled to study, understand, interpret and continue the scholarship of the Indian *darśanas* that have come down to us with an unbroken line of continuity?

We had no doubt that philosophical thinking was separable from the mode of living. What we were worried about was, is a *darśana* also separable from its cultural milieu? This last question contains two sub-questions: in the first place, can a *darśana* be separated from the context of 'pursuit of salvation' in which it was embedded? Secondly, can it be taken out of the sheer intellectual milieu of the ongoing conversation amongst the *darśanas* in which it prospered and took shape? To which, we who were nibbling at a *darśana* here and there, added another self-question: is an Indian *darśana* such

that you can take out a proposition, or a doctrine, from the overall system, and look at it separately? Is not a *darśana* a perfectly holistic structure embedded in another, higher level of holistic structure called by us 'Indian philosophy'?

THE WESTERN INDOLOGIST AND THE DARŚANAS

A reputed German indologist who has translated works on Vedānta into German once confessed to me that he did not believe in the truths of all that stuff. Asked why then did he concern himself with Vedānta, he said his concern was in his professional capacity as an indologist. What does this answer really amount to? An indologist is supposed to deal with every aspect of India, one of whose aspects is Indian philosophy. The professional then must translate works in this field, fill in gaps, supply missing links, look for manuscripts, so on and so forth. The philosopher, e.g., Śaṁkara, was concerned with truth. The indologist does not share that quest with Śaṁkara but wants to find the truth *about* Śaṁkara. So even if he sincerely believe that whatever Śaṁkara says is false, he may spend a lifetime finding the truth *about* him, and not the truth *in* him. If this is true of the indologist, or even of some of that breed, then he will miss something important about the activity of philosophizing. He will never be a participant in that conversation that constitutes the life of a *darśana*.

How can one be concerned all one's life with something about whose importance one has deep qualms? I have spent four decades of my life trying to understand and interpret a German philosopher, for increasingly, in my view, he did see an important truth. The Western indologist recovers that sense of importance (which he misses at the first level, i.e., at the level of the truth-claim of what the philosopher maintains) at a second level: at the level of discourse about cultures, one can find out how, for example, Śaṁkara's non-dualism has influenced Hindu life. If one is a comparative religionist, one may determine the place of such a *darśana* in the context of other available theologies. These are fine, but philosophy, after all, calls for a concern about its truth (*or falsity*) and nothing else can replace that interest.

These remarks aim at emphasizing (1) that a *darśana* and its pursuits have been separated from the mode of living in which it

was embedded—which may be constructed as entailing either that by such separation we have lost the original understanding of the *darśana*, or that the relation between thinking and living was never as tight as one may take it to be; and (2) that a *darśana*—and the *darśanas*—aimed at theoretical truth even if such theoretical truth was pursued as a means to salvation. There is another aspect to it that I wish the indologist to bear in mind. It is this: understanding a text cannot dispense with the tradition of such understanding. In asserting this, I am appealing to a by now familiar theory of interpretation.

TWO THEORIES OF INTERPRETATION

According to one theory, interpreting a text is to decipher the meaning of the text—ideally, the meaning intended by the author himself. The philological canons, together with historical imagination, enables us to reconstruct what must have been the original meaning. The interpreter thus, has to go back to the time of the text, unprejudiced by the pre-conceptions of our own age, or of the intervening ages (and commentaries).

For various reasons, this romantic idea of interpretation is not in vogue today. I need not rehearse these reasons. But a brief mention of some will serve my purpose. First, as Kant said, the author himself is also an interpreter of his work. Secondly, there is no way of getting inside the author's mind in order to decide what his intentions were. We have to work only with the text. Furthermore, what precisely is the text? Is it the printed page, the palm leaf manuscript, the remembered lines? If it is those plus their meanings, if the meanings are gifts of interpretation, and if interpretation has a history, the text itself has a history—what Gadamer misleadingly called *Wirkungsgeschichte*—so that today we, the interpreters, cannot just return to the text in its unsoiled purity, we have to go through the thickness of its interpretive history. This is what the traditional Indian Pandits practised. When I read Śaṁkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, I was taught the sentences as they were interpreted by *Bhāmatī*, as interpreted by *Parimala*, and the last again as interpreted by *Kalpataru*. You do not need to pretend to go directly to the Bhāṣya, and elicit its meaning purely by itself. The tradition did not claim to that naïvety (or had that pride).

In setting up such a contrast between the traditional Indian Pandit and some Western indologists, I am not wishing to prejudge who is on the right track. It is important that we keep this two-fold possibility of interpretive stance in mind. It is a question of how holistically one construes a tradition. Let us keep in mind that even for the most tradition-minded Pandit, the tradition, say, of Śaṁkara-Vedānta was not a rigidly knit totality, but contained alternations within it (you choose either the Bhāmatī or the Vivaraṇa school)—a fissure loosens the holism, and which encourages an interpreter to induce other fissures wherever there are rival interpretations, or new rivalries where there is none, which shows that the traditionalists need not shun originality.

The truth perhaps may lie in the middle. I often wonder, how far you can loosen the tradition, and at the other end, how strong a holism you can maintain. To highlight this contrast—not, to be sure, my making—let me recall two proponents of these two extremes, both dear friends. One of them, the Russian emigré David Zilberman—whose untimely death, to me, was an irreparable loss for the cause of Indian philosophy in the West—held a thoroughgoing holistic view of Indian philosophy. At the other extreme, I am thinking of, not a western indologist, but an Indian scholar, always a breath of fresh air in the Indian intellectual world, Daya Krishna, who is intent upon 'deconstructing' the way both the tradition and the West looks at Indian thought. Zilberman regarded each *darśana* as well as the totality of them as self-sufficient and closed wholes from which nothing can be taken out or to which nothing can be added, so that no doctrine can be treated outside of the system to which it belongs. This position indirectly supported by Calcutta Professor's view that, with regard to Indian philosophy, all that we need to know to do is to study the texts faithfully under well-trained *gurus* and to teach them to qualified students. Daya, on the other hand, has been questioning all those identities which both the traditionalist and the modernist have unquestioningly accepted. Thus, he questions the identity of the Vedic corpus, of the *Upaniṣads* (it was always, according to him, an open question, what is to be included and what not, and decisions were being arbitrarily made), the *Brahmasūtras* or the *Mīmāṁsāsūtras*. He has been questioning the identities of the *darśanas*—in the long run, for him there are individual writers, and even their identities are not immune to questioning.

Invited, along with me, to speak on Indian philosophy at the University of Hawaii, Daya began by saying, there is nothing called Indian philosophy.

As before, I believe, truth must lie somewhere in between these extremes of holism and deconstructionism. And it is with one such loose sense of tradition, that I, like many of my generation, trained originally in western philosophy, went to Sanskrit Pandits to study the *darśanas*. We selected bits and pieces, chapters and sections (I was, for example, impatient with the *maṅgalācaraṇa* which my Pandit insisted I must study) that we thought would serve our philosophical appetites well, and had to persuade the Pandits to teach us those parts sundered from the whole text. Our loyalty to systems was overcome by our loyalty to problems and issues.

'DARŚANA' AND 'PHILOSOPHY'

It is unavoidable today, that any work on Indian philosophy shall relate Indian thought to western thought. The purist in India resents this situation, but he too cannot escape it. He detects a hegemony of political power, but fails to recognize that *this* criticism is resorting to Western discourse. If it is true—as Wilhelm Halbfass has maintained—that the Indian never, on his own, reached out to the West (while Europe was searching for India), it is also true, since at least a century, Indian self-understanding, especially the Indian philosopher's, has been determined by comparison of his tradition with the West. The mainstream Western philosophy, on the other hand, did not try to understand and appropriate Indian thinking in its own texture. This onesidedness makes, on occasion, the best Western thinkers look provincial, compared to Indians with their global orientation.

After a few remarks on this *indifference* of Western philosophy to Indian philosophy, I will return to the question, how the Indian philosopher of today responds to the Western challenge. This indifference is rooted in the Western self-understanding that the very sense of 'philosophy', the very idea of philosophy, and not merely the historical fact, was first instituted in Greece, of which Western thought has been the inheritor. If peoples outside the Greek world developed some project of thinking, this project *must be* totally different from the project of Greek *philosophia*, and such

thinking must be *qua* thinking, different from the thinking that is illustrated in Parmenides, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. This is perception—mistaken and self-deceptive to my mind—and goes back to Hegel who said of Indians that they did not raise their intuitions to the level of concepts, and so did not quite, in the true sense, think. In this regard, the Western interpretation of Indian thought, remains under this mistaken impression that Indian thinking lacked conceptuality and rested on the vagueness of intuition. Two of the great minds of modern Europe shared this Hegelian perception. They are Husserl and Heidegger. Husserl held that the purely theoretical thinking, to the utter exclusion of all practical interests, that is exemplified in 'philosophy', was foreign to the Indians. Heidegger held that, philosophy being in essence Greek-Western, the phrase 'Western-European philosophy' was in truth a tautology. A very influential contemporary American philosopher, Richard Rorty, has given to this thesis a strange ethno-centric version: what has come to be known as 'philosophy' in the West—the works, e.g., of Aristotle, Kant, Heidegger and Quine, has come to be what it is by virtue of a number of self-conscious distinctions (from theology, natural sciences, etc.,) and a number of cultural accidents (e.g., the departmental structure of the universities) and has evolved in course of a distinct history and in response to definite needs (e.g., providing the foundation to other sciences). The works by Indian authors such as Uddyotakara, Digṅāga, Nāgārjuna, and Śaṁkara, in spite of the intellectual maturity and the vigor of their enterprise, do not satisfy these descriptions, and should not be called by that name. I have elsewhere argued, to my mind convincingly, that this historicist argument just does not work, and I will not repeat those arguments here. Let me only note that the issue is not really simply verbal. The question is not, are the *darśanas* to be called *philosophies*? How does it matter what you *call*? Imagine a group of Pandits in Varanasi deciding not to call the Western philosophies *darśanas*. How does that matter? The real substantive concern would not be about the words but about the concepts. Do the Indian *darśanas*, by virtue of their subject matter, their concerns, their methodologies, belong to the same genre of enquiry as philosophy? I think they do.

To the indifference of Western philosophy to the Indian *darśanas*, there are two kinds of responses from the Indian side: first, to claim

a certain superiority over the Western modes of thinking; secondly, to force the Indian modes of thinking into the strait-jacket of Western philosophy.

The first is what I learned in the graduate school of Calcutta. It was a commonplace opinion voiced in different ways by popular and academic philosophers alike, that Indian philosophy was spiritual, that it relied upon intuition rather than intellect (note, thereby sharing Hegel's ill-informed characterization), that it was practical and not theoretical (Husserl could not have agreed more), that it is not objective thinking, but thinking out of a primitive unity of subject and object (thus conforming to Heidegger's suggestion).

What is so surprising is that what we can excuse in Hegel, Husserl, and Heidegger in view of their ignorance of the material, we also learned from the Indians themselves who were supposed to know better. Where did they derive their reading from? As a matter of fact, this coincidence of opposites is not surprising, for the Indians derived their self-understanding from the way the West interpreted them. It is from the West that the English-educated Indians learned that Indian thought was spiritual, intuitive, and practical, and so on and so forth. This was not the self-understanding of a Śaṁkara or a Vātsyāyana or a Nāgrajuna. Whereas the West used the same characterizations to sustain the thesis that Indian thinking remained at the level of primitive mythical-magical-intuitive practicality, the Indians used the very same characterization to support their views that Indian thinking was superior to Western. Both fell into a spurious trap. As we realized the spuriousness of that way of drawing the distinctions and the consequent self and other interpretations—for many of us, this dawned on us not while studying philosophy at the Universities, but rather while simultaneously, studying in the *tol* of the Sanskrit College—the reaction was to move to an opposite extreme. And this is the second response of the Indians to the intellectual confrontation, or lack of it, I am talking about. It consisted in attempts to demonstrate that the best of Indian philosophy was after all the same as the best Western philosophy—that Śaṁkara and Bradley, Rāmānuja and Hegel, or Vaiśeṣika and Aristotle were doing largely similar things, pressing similar theses, advancing similar arguments. For some of us, the appearance, at the beginning of the fifties, of Daniel Ingall's work on Gaṅgeśa's *Vyāptipañcaka* with Māthuri—whose manuscript the Harvard logician Quine read and

discovered, much to his surprise, that the Indian logicians knew e.g., De Morgan's law—was a great inspiration, as we were in graduate school. We read more of Gaṅgeśa, taking Ingall's work as a model. I worked on the *Pratyakṣakhaṇḍa*, which meshed well with my epistemological interests, Sibajiban Bhattacharya worked on *Anumānakhaṇḍa* using the battery of techniques learned from Carnap and Lukasiewicz. Philosophy was one universal pursuit—no matter whether you were dealing with Carnap or with Gadādhara.

UNIVERSALISM AND RELATIVISM

The universalist who 'finds himself everywhere and everything in him' (to use an expression from the *Gītā*, so that Bradley and Śaṁkara become, in essence one (as do many other pairs), will be reminded by the relativist that the commonness is in his own making, a product of what Rorty calls 'imaginative recontextualization'. I believe that there are two extremes that we need to avoid. Neither of these extremes is based on evidence, both appeal to an a priori, therefore, empirically irrefutable argument. At one extreme, we have the universalist, the essentialist, who holds that rationality must be the same everywhere, that philosophy and science could not, in their essence, be touched by local differences. Strip them of their cultural externalities, they come out as the same sort of enterprises. At the other extreme, we have the familiar relativist (whose number and variety today are beyond count) who holds that the very concepts of 'rationality' and 'truth' of 'science' and 'philosophy'—as applied to culturally diverse communities—are not only different, but at least sometimes radically different, which would amount to saying, that Indian and Western philosophy are not only different philosophies but, as philosophies different, i.e., the very sense of 'philosophy' differs from one to the other so much that to use the same word for both is just misleading.

I can only briefly state my reasons for rejecting both. Show the relativist that a particular thesis in an Indian philosophical system is just the same as one in the West, his response would be: that semblance of identity is your own making, you have abstracted the thought from its context and made it appear that way. This is an a priori argument which no evidence can refute. The essentialist is no better off. Show him that two seemingly identical theses are

really different in significant ways, he will say: those differences are extrinsic, context-sensitive, and so do not affect the essence.

My own experience has been that just when an exciting point of agreement is identified and pursued, surprising differences erupt; and just when you have the feeling that no two ideas could be further apart, identities catch you off guard. In a Hegelian fashion, I would like to say, the universality of rational thinking transcends and yet comprehends local differences, it lives in and through those differences. Recalling advice from A.N. Whitehead, I tell myself: 'Search for simplicity, but distrust it when you find it.'

SOME INTERPRETIVE STANCES

If Sibajiban Bhattacharyya was using the techniques of advanced mathematical logic to represent Navya-Nyāya and Bimal Matilal was using Oxford and analytical philosophy to interpret Nyāya realism, I was too busy reading, interpreting and editing the large Husserlian corpus, but, in between, as though not to lose touch, picking out themes and thoughts to test if they conformed to my phenomenological expectations. But perhaps, the most radical of Western philosophy-inspired interpreters, in recent years, of Indian philosophy, were Ganeśwar Miśra and J.L. Mehta, both dear friends, both passed away in the recent past. Miśra, trained in London under A.J. Ayer, applied his undoubted linguistic and analytic skills to interpret Advaita Vedānta (to such works as the *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṁgraha* and the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*). In the sixties, he was considered a rebel in the Indian Philosophical Congress meetings, then grudgingly accepted and admired. Mehta studied with Heidegger, earned his affection, and authored a book on Heidegger widely read as one of the very best in any language. Not being able to survive the academic politics in BHU, he spent his last 20 years in Harvard University Divinity School interpreting the Indian religious literature with the Heideggerean hermeneutic principles. My reflections on these two astute scholars and thinkers are to be found in my introductory essays to their collected papers.[1] The two, as interpreted, present as radical a contrast as possible. Working through their papers, I became more convinced than ever before that while the inexhaustible richness of the Indian philosophical literature permits an interpreter, with any methodological commit-

ment, to find fruitful and exciting application of his favoured methodology, no methodological monism can be faithful to the Indian tradition as a whole. For, the Indian philosophers used a large variety of methods to their advantage; they used analysis of ordinary language (*lokavyavahāra*), they used hermeneutics of texts (*vākyārthavicāra*), they appealed like phenomenologists to the testimony of one's experience (*svānubhavasākṣi*), they used dialectical, disputational, refutations, (not to speak of *ad hominem* arguments, as when Vedayana accused the Buddhists of not knowing the language, i.e., Sanskrit, well enough!) And all this was used against the background of a cultural tradition which philosophical thinking presupposed—in India's as elsewhere—from which it draws its substance and material and relevance.

TRANSLATION BACK AND FORTH

I have maintained—as against the purist—that today interpreting Indian philosophy (I am not talking about what is called 'comparative philosophy') cannot dispense with reference to Western thought, and have wished the reverse were also true. But I have also just cautioned against any methodological monism inculcated from one's commitment to any of the large variety of philosophical fashions obtaining in the West. The ultimate court of appeal has to be the Sanskrit texts themselves.

It is well known in recent philosophy that translation and interpretation run into each other. At the end of this lecture, I wish to make a few remarks on the question of translation. The interpreter of Sanskrit texts generally worries about how the key Sanskrit words are to be translated. But he needs also to ask: how the Western, in our case English, philosophical words should translate into Sanskrit. The latter question is not often asked—much to our disadvantage.

I have elsewhere argued against rendering *jñāna* into 'knowledge' (for 'false knowledge' does not make sense, while *mithyājñāna* does). I am deeply concerned about translating *śruti* as 'sacred text' or interpreting *śabdapramāṇa* as 'appeal to authority'. How is 'authority' to be rendered in Sanskrit, and does that equivalent emerge in philosophical discourse?

But, to conclude, I will ask you to consider two claims made

about Indian philosophy—which give rise to deep translational problems. One hears that the method of Indian thinking was 'intuitive', and also that Indian philosophy is 'spiritual'. I wish to ask, how do the two words 'intuition' and 'spiritual' (and their cognates) translate into Sanskrit, and if those translational equivalents function in philosophical discourse. First, with regard to 'intuition': the English word is ambiguous enough to permit a clear translation. Perhaps what is at the core is some notion of an unmediated, non-conceptual, non-linguistic cognition. The possible Sanskrit equivalents are: *nirvikalpa pratyakṣa, Prajña, Yogipratyakṣa, Pratibhā, Aparokṣānubhūti*. To my knowledge, none of these, in any of the *darśanas*, is used to characterize the nature of the philosophical cognition, although each is a designation for a certain mode of knowing accepted in some system or other. No *darśana* uses it when it admits it; it rather talks about it, demonstrating its possibility.

Finally, as to 'spirit' and 'spiritual': how would you have expressed, in Sanskrit, the claim that Indian thought was *spiritual*? The word *ādhyātmika* comes to mind. I believe that this word, as used in the modern Indian languages—and used as synonymous with 'spiritual'—had a different sense in the Sanskrit philosophical discourse. One also needs to look into the origin of the word 'spirit', and the large philosophical use of *Geist* by Hegel. But that is another story.

GLOBAL & LOCAL CHARACTERIZATIONS

If one thing enmerges from some of my remarks, it is this: let us postpone global characterization of Indian philosophy as a whole until local characterizations are secure. Instead of asking: how is Indian philosophy different from the Western, let us ask: how is Indian logic different, how is Hindu mathematics different, how is Indian psychology different, and so on and so forth. Each of these middle-level questions break up into still specific inquiries: Is the *hetu* of an *anumāna* the 'middle term,' is *vyāpti* a necessary proposition, are there 'propositions' at all in Indian logic? What proof-theory underlies the Hindu mathematical demonstrations? But that is only the beginning of all these fascinating, and relatively tractable questions, and they will facilitate avoiding mistakes about the sort of global characteristics which many of our predecessors—led by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan—loved to ascribe to Indian philosophy.

NOTES

1. See G. Miśra *Language Reality and Analysis: Essays on Indian Philosophy* (ed. by J.N. Mohanty) Leidert E.J. Brill 1990 and J.L. Mehta on *Heidegger, Hermeneutics and Indian Tradition* (ed. by William Jackson, Leiden E.J. Brill 1992).

21
Philosophy in India 1967–73

In his *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies*, Karl Potter makes the following remarks about the present state of philosophy in India:

> ...philosophy in India for the moment has degenerated into mere scholarship, the description, classification, and comparison of Indian or Western schools of thought. Philosophers no longer talk problems; they talk about problems.... They find themselves caught in a sort of limbo between the attitudes of the Indian past, of which they have lost hold, and the attitudes of the Western present, in which they are still not at home.[1]

The present review of philosophical writings in India during the last five years may help us to re-appraise the status of Indian philosophy.

I

Indian philosophical thought has been deeply metaphysical, and it is no surprise that, faced with the anti-metaphysical thrust of contemporary philosophy, one of the issues uppermost in the minds of Indian thinkers is the question of the possibility of metaphysics. In recent philosophical literature, two tendencies are discernible: an attempt to defend metaphysics in the traditional grand style, and a concern with the idea of descriptive metaphysics as an alternative. For the former, we may turn to Kalidas Bhattacharyya[2] and J.N. Chubb[3]: for the latter to J.N Mohanty[4] and S.N. Ganguly.[5]

Kalidas Bhattacharyya sets out from the problem of reflective knowledge, which for him is the problem of what reflection reveals as well as the problem of how it comes to reveal that which, although present in the object of unreflective experience, was hitherto unknown. He rejects the facile answer that reflection is a function of attention which lights up hitherto dark corners; we do not know what atten-

tion is. He also considers inadequate the answer that one did not previously perceive what reflection now reveals, simply because the originally given situation had not yet become problematic for the individual. The idea which he considers to be of central importance is that of 'objective implicitness' or 'fusion', which is different from mere subjective confusion. The task of metaphysics, according to Bhattacharyya, is to detect, in their distinctness, the entities like self, space, and time, and the essences which, in unreflective experience, are given as fused. He considers both the unreflective state of fusion and the reflective state of distinctness as objective, even if distinctness may be *dependent* upon the subjective act of distinguished. The pertinent question at this point is, what is the relation between the objective distinctness and the subjective act of reflective distinguishing? The former surely is not produced by the latter, yet it is in some sense relative to it.[6] What Bhattacharyya does is to assimilate this sort of dependence to what would appear to be two very different sorts of dependence: that of the illusory snake to the hallucinating percipient and that of the comparative qualities ('larger', 'smaller') to the subjective acts of comparing. In each of these cases, the objective correlate is truly objective and yet is dependent upon, though not produced by, the subjective act. It would seem that the phenomenological structure of noetic-noematic correlation would better elucidate the sort of 'dependence' which Bhattacharyya has in his mind.

We have, according to Bhattacharyya, two levels of apprehending an entity: in pre-reflective experience it is given as fused, in reflection it is given as distinct. Bhattacharyya considers the latter as the *proper* form of that entity, and emphasizes that his use of 'proper' should not be confused with the words 'real' and 'true'. What he means is that only in reflection does the entity itself come to be given in its own form, the *X* as *X*, whereas in unreflective experience it was given indistinctly, was not recognized as *X*. Now, metaphysical entities, according to Bhattacharyya, are such that they cannot be perceived in their distinct nature at the unreflective level.[7] It should be obvious that Bhattacharyya's 'unreflective experience' is not the 'pre-reflective experience' of a Sartre or Merleau-Ponty, nor is it the same as the 'immediate experience' of a Bradley. It is rather the ordinary experience of the world prior to any 'metaphysical' reflection. It would seem, then, that it is not necessary for his purpose

to hold, as he does, that the object of our unreflective awareness is always a homogenous whole.[8] It seems that this concept of immediacy is too romantic to be true. But even if one regards the pre-reflective experience to be structured, as Husserl took it to be, it nevertheless may be the case that the essences and essential structures to be discovered by the phenomenologist are not given as such in pre-reflective experience. In the language of Bhattacharyya, they are given as fused.

We need not go into Bhattacharyya's remarks on contemporary antimetaphysical trends. He confidently advocates the claim of reflective intuition against a dogmatic sensuous empiricism. But what is important to note is that he claims neither sense-perception nor non-sensuous intuition to be unerring.[9] It would seem that he does not wish to consider intuitability as a criterion of reality. Reflective intuition of *X* as distinct, then, cannot assure us of the *reality* of *X*. A philosophy which describes the data of such intuitions would then be metaphysics in a strange sense, for by metaphysics is ordinarily meant the science of what is ultimately *real*. Bhattacharyya does not distinguish between metaphysics and phenomenology. However, what he talks about would seem to be the eidetic ontology of the early phenomenologists, and his 'reflection' as a process of distinguishing would seem to be closely related to the phenomenological methods of 'bracketing'. However, what is baffling is how, granted that both pre-reflective fusion and reflective distinction are objective, the *movement* from the one to the other is also objective. For Bhattacharyya, even that development is objective.[10]

If Bhattacharyya's metaphysics is a phenomenological ontology conceived as description of essences and essential structures reflectively distinguished, J.N. Chubb distinguishes between 'critical philosophy' and 'constructive philosophy'. Chubb concedes that constructive philosophy is 'biased' thinking, but considers bias not as a defect but as the essence of such thinking. In fact, he rejects the assumption that there can be non-committed, unbiased philosophical thinking though he seems to allow that in an important sense scientific thinking is unbiased.[11] In his view, in philosophical thinking one does not arrive at conclusions but rather explicates 'foregone conclusions'. Philosophical thinking rests on prior ontological commitments, such that even those who reject metaphysics, the positivists for example, have their own implicit *affirmation* about the nature of the

world.[12] In this sense, then, one who seeks to eliminate metaphysics in whatever manner is contradicting himself, for he himself is committed to one.[13] That constructive philosophy can only systematically develop prior ontological commitments and to that extent is necessarily biased is recognized by critical philosophy (which is what Chubb does). For Chubb, metaphysical divergences do exist and must exist. He rejects any methodological monism and suggests the cultivation of an attitude of standing back 'from the turmoil of polemical thought in a poise of detached contemplation' and being aware of our thought 'wholly at its root'.[14] This involves 'a way of looking rather than a way of reasoning'.[15] The critical philosopher then would not seek to impose his own standards on others, but will try to understand all different possibilities through sympathy and detachment. Chubb's ideal of unbiased critical thinking which simply sees philosophical positions as alternate possibilities is perhaps best illustrated in the Jaina theory of *naya*. Chubb himself sees in it the cultivation of the Vedānta stance of a witness (*sākṣi*).

I shall here raise only two questions: first, if all philosophical thinking is biased, if presuppositionless thinking is impossible, how can critical philosophy assume such a stance at all, and if the critical philosopher can cultivate this stance towards the thinking of the metaphysician, what stands in the way of the metaphysician's taking up the same stance towards the world? Furthermore, are there only two alternatives before the critical philosopher? Must he settle for a methodological monism by which philosophical dispute would appear to be resolved once for all, or take to passive, detached contemplation of an endless variety of thought-patterns? Is there not another possibility according to which the critical philosopher is a participant, not an observer, in the ongoing process of philosophical thinking, and not a tyrant or dictator, but one who enters into genuine dialogue with the other? The possibility of a dialogue, as distinguished from passive looking on, is perhaps more promising, and in fact this is what the best of philosophers seem to have done.

Mohanty and Ganguly show concern with the idea of a descriptive metaphysics. Mohanty's 'Philosophical Description' is an attempt to bring out the distinctions between a philosophical description and a description that is not philosophical. It also seeks to distinguish, within a philosophical system, between its descriptive and speculative components and tries to isolate certain common 'ways in which

the descriptive finding is used for speculative metaphysics.'[16] Philosophical descriptions, it is argued, are intended to be descriptions of essential structures, non-philosophical descriptions are of contingent attributes or structures. Philosophical descriptions, as contrasted with non-philosophical descriptions, are such that they *permit* a threefold interpretation: they may be regarded as concerned with linguistic meanings, or with noetic acts, or with objective essences. A genuine philosophical description must not make further use of any prior knowledge, preconception or presupposition. The speculative philosopher generally employs description as his starting point, but he soon proceeds to construct a system on that basis, using that as his springboard for speculative flights and taking recourse to various patterns of thought movement. He either 'fills in gaps' (reducing the heterogeneity of phenomena to a homogeneity) or 'generalizes' a descriptively valid thesis over a domain that goes far beyond the limits within which that thesis has descriptive validity (e.g., intentionality is taken as characterizing *all* actual entities), or accords exclusive recognition to some one favored mode of description (linguistic, noetic, or ontological); or even inquires into the conditions of the possibility of a descriptive thesis.

While Mohanty's paper does not meet the skeptic's question whether descriptive philosophy is at all possible, Ganguly subjects the claim of the descriptive metaphysician to a searching criticism and argues that philosophical activity never shall be able to free itself 'from any trace of imagination, as opposed to description, in its search for generalities in our knowledge'.[17] The main thrust of Ganguly's attack centres around the question of uniqueness of a description. According to him, while a factual description need not assert its own uniqueness, a metaphysical description has, by its very nature, to assert its own claim to uniqueness.[18] And this claim, Ganguly argues, cannot be established. However, he does not deal with the question, why a description, in philosophy, has to be unique: why, for example, does the possibility of alternate philosophical descriptions have to be ruled out *ab initio*? Further, Ganguly regards it as evidently true that in order to be able to describe a fact or a state of affairs we must have a conceptual framework. This talk of a 'conceptual framework', understood on the model of a closed system, is today so common that we tend to accept its validity without questioning what it means. It is well therefore to ask, how

much can be truly saved from this facile appeal to 'conceptual frameworks'. Ganguly and Chubb agree, however, that though no metaphysical description is possible (for Ganguly, no unique description in metaphysics is possible, and for him uniqueness is essential to the metaphysician's claim: for Chubb, no unbiased metaphysical thinking is possible so that it would seem for him descriptive philosophy requires freedom from bias), yet a description of what a metaphysician does, i.e., of the different conceptual frameworks, is possible. This is Ganguly's 'meta-description' and Chubb's variety of 'critical philosophy'. Further, both agree that metaphysics involves a value-decision. For Ganguly, this value-decision concerns what is to count as *the best* description of the world. Perhaps I should add that this characterization, if true, would be true only of those metaphysical systems which claim to be descriptive.

An interesting illustration of what Ganguly has in mind is provided by his contrast between the existentialist's model of *confrontation* and the positivist's model of *observation*. Is it, one may ask, merely a question of arbitrary decision as to which of these models is to be accepted as less misleading and possibly more adequate for our understanding of the nature of experience? Is it the case, as Ganguly claims, that 'the final choice is not settled by what is *given* but by what one intuits to be *primarily given* to fit in to his value-orientation?'[19] May we not rather say that the positivist's model is based on unwarranted epistemological presuppositions and besides is not a true description of the way we find ourselves in the world and with the others? One consequence of relativizing all philosophical choice to further unjustifiable value commitments is a seeming end to rational thinking. Further, it is not brought to self-consciousness that this counsel of despair, this relativism itself is based on a certain preconception regarding the nature of human thinking, and to that extent cannot claim, as a meta-description, adequacy in any more objective sense. This, in fact, is what remains a source of worry in this denial of the possibility of first order description conjoined with a thesis that it itself is, or claim to be, a higher order description or a meta-description.

Neither Chubb nor Bhattacharyya work out in details their own versions of metaphysics or critical philosophy respectively; to that extent, both the papers remain programmatic. Kalyan Kumar Bagchi's *Metalanguage and Transcendental Idealism* develops some of the

suggestions in the writings of Kalidas Bhattacharyya and his father the late K.C. Bhattacharyya, in order to offer an interpretation of Advaita Vedānta which he calls, misleadingly it would seem, 'Transcendental Idealism'. Bagchi relies upon what he calls the 'subjective method' which consists in 'consciousness standing apart from its theoretic or intellectual trappings', which he also calls 'clarification' of consciousness—not clarification in the Husserlian sense of returning to originary evidence but in the sense of 'purifying' or 'dissociating' itself from its intellectual constructions.[20] Consciousness isolates theory from fact, but in this process discovers that there is no fact that is not 'adulterated by theory'.[21] This purified consciousness understood as a consciousness of theory as theory, and of its dissociation from its own constructions provides Bagchi with the vantage point for Transcendental Idealism. Transcendental Idealism consists in 'the reduction of the "meant" content to the construction of the subject.'[22] So far his argument is fairly straightforward. What leads Bagchi into complications is his theory of language. He distinguishes between three levels of language[23]: language as referring to a content, language as constructing the contents, and language as incarnation of the spirit. He seems to oscillate between looking upon these as three levels of language and regarding them as three levels of our understanding of the function of language. The latter, it would seem, is more appropriate to his venture, whose principal drawback is a lack of an adequate theory of the nature of consciousness or subjectivity. Only a fully developed theory of consciousness could provide the theoretical foundation needed for such an idealism, but then an adeaquate understanding of the nature of consciousness may preclude the totally constructive role that is here assigned to it.

Another interesting suggestion is contained in the concluding chapter of N.V. Banerjee's *The Concept of Philosophy* which contains his K.C. Bhattacharyya Memorial Lectures. Following upon his earlier book *Language, Meaning and Person* Banerjee rejects the Cartesian concept of the insular subject on the grounds that it makes for solipsism, and solipsism is 'a travesty of the human situation'.[24] He also rejects the concept of the Absolute, the only *philosophical* justification of which rests on a prior acceptance of the Cartesian insular subject.[25] What Banerjee proposes, in order to better explain the possibility of objective knowledge, is the concept of 'I *with*

others=we' as being the subjective side of the cognitive situation, 'the transcendental implication of the very fact of knowledge'.[26] The superhuman self or the Absolute is neither a possible object of knowledge not a transcendental implication of knowledge, and hence has no place in philosophy. But Banerjee warns us not to treat the 'I *with* others' as itself being a content of knowledge; it is not empirical, it does not admit of being formulated in terms of the assertion 'I *am* in interpersonal relations to other selves'.[27] It is a spiritual demand for man to actualize the transcendental 'I *with* others' in interpersonal existence. The classical conception of liberation is then interpreted as the conception of the actualization of this transcendental 'I *with* others'.[28] One crucial question which Banerjee does not answer but which is unavoidable at this point is: how is one to understand the thought of actualizing a Kantian transcendental presupposition?

II

It is in essential continuity with the tradition of Indian philosophy that some Indian philosophers have turned to the problematic of consciousness and its relation to the world. Of these, the most important are: Sibajiban Bhattacharyya's 'The Concept of Cognitive Reference' and P.K. Mukhopadhyaya's 'Intentionality and the Problem of Transcendent World'.[29] Sibajiban concentrates on the concept of 'reference', and after a preliminary survey of the various usages and theories, reduces them to two: the conception of reference as an act, and the conception of reference as a relation. In both cases, reference is a transcendence, a going beyond. How is this going beyond possible? How can a particular cognition be the cognition of its own object? The theory of content or *Inhalt* is set aside not only as complicating but also as postponing the issue; for, first, the content has to be the content *of* this object (cp. Husserl's objection to the *Bild* theory in the *Logical Investigations*), and secondly, the appeal to the idea of resemblance between the content and the object is laden with hopeless difficulties.[30] The *Tractatus* theory of isomorphism is rejected on the ground that reference is not symmetrical (the object does not refer to its consciousness) while isomorphism is.[31] Sibajiban then rejects a series of other theories of reference: reference is neither an inference, nor a synthesis of sensory manifold into the

unity of the object. Nor can the problem of cognitive reference be simply eliminated by doing away with all reference to subjectivity in our analysis of knowledge. Against the argument that whereas '*X* knows that *p*' does entail, while the fact that *X* has a certain state of mind does not entail, the truth of *p*, Sibajiban points out: first, 'if no mental state can guarantee the truth of *p*, no disposition, physical or mental, can do it either'; and secondly, 'if there is any method which by following I can have the right to be sure that *p*, then any mental state which is produced by that method will also guarantee the truth of *p*'.[32] Thus he poses a dilemma for us: '*either* the truth of *p* is wholly independent of me, and therefore of every mental state or of every disposition of mine, as also of *my* right to be sure that *p*, or it is not. If it is not independent of me then knowledge may be a mental state produced in a particular way, i.e., when I follow a particular method'. Now this seems to me to miss an important point about the argument against which it is directed. What entails the truth of *p* is not any disposition or even my *right* to be sure or *my* following a certain method, but the truth of the sentence '*X* knows that *p*'.

Is then cognitive reference a relation? Sibajiban considers Brentano's objections to subsume intentionality under ordinary relations and points out that Brentano nevertheless does admit a sort of relation. Under the topic of relation Sibajiban discusses two theses, the first of which is Russell's theory of judgement as a multiple relation between the judging mind and the elements of the fact. The difficulties of this theory for Sibajiban are obvious. If the judgement is about the fact *aRb*, the judgment complex contains four terms; *m* (i.e., the judging mind), *a, R, b* and a further relation *J* (i.e. judging), the order of *a, R, b* is determined by *J*. This, however, is not the case with regard to the constitution of the fact *aRb*. The other relational theory discussed is the Nyāya theory which wants to have a cognitive relation without the mediation of contents. On Russell's theory, as Sibajiban represents it, *R* was a term in the judgment complex but a relation in the fact complex. The Nyāya is taken to have solved this problem by positing a special type of cognitive relation to the relational component *R* of the fact known. In fact, the Nyāya also posits special types of cognitive relations for the substantive and qualificative components of the fact as well. Sibajiban's painstaking review of the problematic and major theories

of cognitive reference excels in its negative achievement, while the positive theory he defends, i.e., the Nyāya theory, is only too sketchily expounded.[33] It is also unfortunate that he does not pay enough attention to the only fully developed theory of reference in western philosophy, i.e., the Husserlian theory of intentionality.

Mukhopadhyaya's 'Intentionality and the Problem of Transcendental World'[34] does take account of the work of Husserl, but only within a very limited theoretical perspective. The question which interests Mukhopadhyaya is: Does the phenomenological concept of intentionality serve the purpose of realism? Does it make it possible for us to assert the existence of an independent world and does it enable us to establish 'an intelligible relation between knowledge and its independent object'? Apparently, for Mukhopadhyaya, the two questions are interconnected, in the sense that success in establishing realism would be measured, even if partially, by the success in establishing 'an intelligible relation between knowledge and its independent object'. It seems that for phenomenology all questions are 'oriented towards the question of absolute evidence'. Since the intentionality of consciousness is revealed in such apodictic evidence, Mukhopadhyaya expects that the independent world should also be revealed with apodictic certitude. It may be urged against this, however, that this would be a highly misleading formulation of the task of the phenomenologist. For Husserl, surely, not all things are given with apodicticity, certainly not the world. Even if the intentionality of consciousness is given with apodicticity, it only concerns the noetic-noematic structure, but not the reference to a world truly independent and outside of consciousness. The problem for Husserl is not to recover the independent world with the help of intentionality, not to prove or establish realism (or, for that matter, idealism), but to clarify, with intuitive, originary evidence, the *sense* of the world's presumptive independence. Thus the alleged failure of Husserl to prove the independence of the world is beside the point so far as Husserlian phenomenology is concerned, for, as I have argued elsewhere,[35] the Husserlian concept of intentionality owes its philosophical importance precisely to the fact that it is neutral as to the philosophical theories of realism and idealism. With regard to Sartre's attempt to establish realism, Mukhopadhyaya is right in urging[36] that 'the rejection of solipsism does not necessarily prove the existence of a transcendent world'. For Sartre, however,

the notion of intentionality does seem to lead to realism. For Sartre, the intentionality of consciousness implies that the very being of consciousness consists in being directed towards, or open to, an other. The intentionality of consciousness is in itself an empty nothingness; it is not the sort of thing which could possibly contain anything at all within it. If that be so, a very plausible case in indeed made out for realism (as much as the conception of *jñāna* as *nirākāra*, in Indian thought, seems to entail realism of some kind; for the *ākāra*, the form or content, that is given would then belong to something other and cannot possibly belong to the *jñāna* itself).[37] Mukhopadhyaya does not pay attention to this side of Sartre's claim. His fine and searching paper is thus marred by a fundamental misconstruction of the phenomenologist's true problem, which is *not to prove anything* but to describe the structure of phenomena and clarify the sense of our concepts by returning to originary evidence. The problem of clarification has to be kept apart from the problem of finding reasons for what one may happen to believe.

In a more recent paper,[38] Mukhopadhyaya argues for the doctrine of cognitive act as being essential for any realistic epistemology. Setting aside the metaphysical problems regarding the notion of cognitive act and restricting himself only to the epistemological problem of accounting for the distinction between 'thing' and 'object', Mukhopadhyaya contends that this distinction, so essential for realism, can only be taken care of by a theory of cognitive act. He asks, 'how this knowing is to be conceived such that it can turn a being into an object?'[39] Again, he rightly sees that though it would seem that the cognitive act theory implies the theory of self as the cognitive agent, not all those who deny cognitive act do so because they deny the cognitive agent, self, or ego. The Buddhists and the Naiyāyikas both deny cognitive acts even if they differ among themselves regarding the existence of agent or self. However, Mukhopadhyaya does not make it clear, why the act theory is needed to account for the distinction between thing and object. It may be that he has in mind the assumption that the distinction between 'thing' and 'object' implies that the thing *becomes* an object and that therefore this becoming or transformation requires an act as its cause. Something like this was argued, as is well known, by the Bhātta Mīmāṁsakas. But such an assumption would be totally wrong. The thing, by being known, does not undergo a change.

Nothing happens to the thing when it is known. To become an object does not involve a real transformation of the thing. Mukhopadhyaya writes that he takes knowledge to be intentional.[40] Now, Husserl does *call* all intentional experiences acts, but he does not want 'act' to be understood in the ordinary sense of activity but only in the defined sense of intentional experience. In this sense, even on the Nyāya view, knowledge (though a *guṇa* and not a *kriyā*) is a Husserlian act. What certainly is needed for saving the distinction between thing and object is a suitable concept of intentionality, but not a concept of mental activity. Intentionality is not a form of activity, but action in the ordinary sense is a kind of intentionality.

Pratima Bowes' *Consciousness and Freedom: Three Views*[41] is an attempt to develop a 'multi-dimensional' theory of man by incorporating the three major theories she discusses about the nature of mind and consciousness. She rightly sees that a science can only study what its methodology allows it to, and leaves out those aspects of human experience and behaviour which are not amenable to its method.[42] Consequently, the thesis that consciousness does not really exist expresses a value decision regarding the types of fact about man that are really important or significant. Thus far, many phenomenologists would agree with Bowes. However, she goes further and extends the same approach to Husserl and the existential phenomenologists as well, and also to the Indian schools of Sāṁkhya and Vedānta: 'the insistence on the centrality of consciousness in the face of contrary evidence really represents a value judgment'.[43] Husserlian phenomenology which Bowes erroneously regards as primarily concerned with reflective, self-conscious thinking and not with pre-reflective experience or understanding of the world, is then shown to be based upon the value judgment that reflective thought is the most typical way of being human.[44] The Indian theories likewise begin with the fact that consciousness can take up the attitude of a witness, but they at the same time regard this as the most significant fact about man. Thus, much of philosophy of mind, on this thesis, is concealed value judgment. So far as this general attitude is concerned, Bowes is in company with some other Indian philosophers we have discussed earlier: they all share the hope that the conflicts among philosophical theories may be resolved if only we cease to defend a theory on theoretical grounds, but recognize that in the long run it is an elaboration of an extra-theoretical

decision. I find this approach not so exciting, precisely because it solves all conflicts and takes the edge away from the theoretical enterprise of checking theories with facts and testing arguments by rational standards.

III

Daya Krishna wants to throw light on the human situation from a somewhat different perspective.[45] Daya rightly counters the currently fashionable rejection of the notion of objectivity altogether. For him, 'without the notion of objectivity, human seeking will not make much sense in any realm whatsoever'[46] for it is the tension between the subjective and the objective which offers the motivating force for all human seeking. The subjective cannot also be denied, for the subject is the source of all striving, delusion as well as creativity. Daya sees that the distinction between subjective and objective is enormously complex. He makes a valuable distinction between the subject and the subjective on the one hand, and between the object and the objective on the other. the distinction between subject and object is metaphysical, the distinction between the subjective and the objective is epistemological. The former pair helps us, according to Daya, to understand man's complex relation to the world; the latter pair is necessary for understanding what he calls the failures of these relationships. His point seems to be that only cases of failure (error, disappointment, illusion) bring out what is merely subjective. But we have also to remember that failures stand out against the background of possible or actual success (knowledge, fulfilment, veridical perception). To be objective, then, is to be a possible terminus of a fulfilling experience. In any case, for Daya, the human situation needs these contradictory pairs of concepts, and philosophers have felt the need for resolving such contradictions owing to their pre-conception that there cannot be *real* contradiction.[47] It is unjustifiable to proceed from the felt need for resolution to the *assertion* of the resolution. In a Kierkegaardian fashion, Daya would rather have the paradox in the structure of human nature, and in this refusal to move towards a monistic philosophy of man, I think, he is fundamentally right. It is quite another question, however, whether he really succeeds in saving the subject-object distinction; what he really does save is the distinction between intention and fulfilment. What is necessary for his

purpose is that there be unfulfilled intentions. Without touching upon the existential dimension in which his thinking here moves, it may be argued that the intentionality of consciousness, the self-transcending reference of consciousness, needs no further metaphysical 'founding', that all attempts to provide such a 'founding' in a subjective or objective monism are grounded not in phenomena themselves but in theoretical preconceptions.[48] The same perspective characterizes Daya's 'Alienation, Positive and Negative'[49]: 'Between the alienation and the overcoming of alienation lies the eternal dialectic of man, at all levels and in all dimensions.'[50] He rejects Marx on the ground that alienation is neither historical nor social, and by placing it in the very structure of self-consciousness he is closer to Hegel of the *Phenomenology*. The Indian concept of *mokṣa* was conceived as an overcoming of such alienation—a state of consciousness for which the 'other' is either abolished or simply set aside with detachment. In another paper, 'Active and Contemplative Values',[51] Daya contrasts the contemplative search of consciousness for a complete rapport with its own being, for achieving freedom by withdrawing itself from the other, including history and society, with the activists' search for 'involvement in temporality, historicity and sociality'.[52] This contrast, in fact this opposition—in spite of his recognition that elements of the one may be present in the other[53] (Gandhi may be an illustration of this intermingling)—is taken as defining the central dilemma of man's experience of values. In various ways and with doubtful success, the Hindu and the Buddhist moral philosophers (as does *Kṛṣṇa* in the *Bhagavadgītā*) sought to resolve the contradiction between the *nivṛttimārga* and the *pravṛttimārga*, but if Daya's thesis is correct then such efforts cannot entirely succeed. *Kṛṣṇa's* is not a reconciliation, for the goal is still contemplative *mokṣa* and action is only a means to it. There is, however, one great attempt made to reconcile them integrally, and that is to be found in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Unfortunately, Daya does not reflect on it. Daya's thesis contrasts with the optimism expressed by Margaret Chatterjee in her 'The Therapeutic Theme in Philosophy'[54] where, after contrasting what she calls the various 'therapies', she opts for a therapy of involvement 'seasoned with detachment and informed with knowledge',[55] very close indeed to *Kṛṣṇa's* discourse to Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgītā*.

Whereas Daya sees a certain one-sidedness in the contemplative

goal of *mokṣa*, Rajendra Prasad wants to do 'a conceptual study, a conceptual mapping' in order to determine the 'logical status of the concept of *mokṣa* vis-à-vis some other related Indian value-concepts'.[56] Apart from trying to show a certain structural relationship between the four basic values recognized in Hindu thought (*artha* or material good, *kāma* or sensual pleasure, *dharma* or social morality, and *mokṣa* or spiritual freedom),[57] Rajendra Prasad considers the role of *mokṣa* in that value system as a sort of metaphysical justification of ethics. *Mokṣa* is a descriptive term, it refers to a state of affair. Desire for *mokṣa* may be a motive for *dharma*, but no justification. *Mokṣa* is not as such an evaluation term. 'Bliss', may be a value, but, asks Rajendra Prasad, why should eternal bliss be the ultimate value?[58] Bliss may be desirable in contrast with pain, but eternal bliss when all pain is gone may no longer seem desirable. For Rajendra Prasad, the experience of *mokṣa* may tell us what *mokṣa* is, not that and why it is the highest value. The discussion is guided by Rajendra Prasad's basic belief that no ontological justification of ethics is possible. But even accepting, though with reservations, that no ought-statement may be derived from one or more is-statements, one may nevertheless want to ask, if the concept of *mokṣa* though appearing to be descriptive (and in fact is claimed by many of its proponents to be so), is not really evaluative in its genesis? Is it not, in its descriptive claim, really a hypostatization of what is first entertained as a value? If that be so, one may urge, this more primary evaluation itself is not ontologically justified, it rather 'founds' the corresponding ontology.

The distinction between fact and value (or, between factual and evaluative sentences), and the question if all values are subjective or any of them, if at all, are objective have interested many contemporary Indian philosophers. N.K. Devaraja[59] argues for a position which, in effect, reduces factual statements to evaluative ones. His argument is tenuous and not all its steps are clear. Devaraja's argument is based upon a rejection of the correspondence theory of truth, and upon tying the notion of meaning, and thus of truth, to the subjective intention and purpose of the utterer. From both of these, it *seems to follow* that all truth is human truth, and Devaraja concludes: 'That is a fact which can be depended upon for the production of an objective value'.[60] The question, whether and to what extent a theory of meaning has to take into consideration the intention of the utterer, is enormously complex;[61] but it would seem that no

theory of meaning can be satisfactory unless it is able to take care of both the aspects of the total phenomenon: that an expression means something, and also that the speaker means something by using an expression. Nor does rejection of correspondence theory or of a certain formulation of that theory, lead to denial of 'fact'. At the same time, in his theory of evaluative statements, Devaraja relies heavily upon the vague concept of 'normally constituted and properly trained persons tend, under a given set of circumstances, to prefer one type of experience or deed (actual or imagined) to another'.[62] He does not explicitly distinguish between value judgments and valuational principles. Certainly, in making a specific value judgment 'This *X* is good' I am not saying anything about all persons of a certain sort, but it may be that in making a value judgment I am appealing to a value principle which may be said to have such a universal import. S.C. Sengupta rightly distinguishes between the universalizability of a moral judgement and the universality of its underlying moral principle; and on the basis of that distinction makes a valid point against existentialist ethics and situation ethics which deny any universal principle, or at best are prepared to eliminate any principle should the situation so demand.[63] Sengupta nevertheless recognizes that the universality of a moral principle is 'existential' in the sense that it has to take into account the particularity of situations and since all situations which may claim to be exceptions cannot be known in advance, the principle has a 'non-terminating openness' and flexibility.[64] This is sound phenomenology, but we have still to expect Sengupta to explain how he can save the universal moral principle from the threat of dissipating into an endless series of universalizations of each novel situation as it arises. A.S. Ayyub[65] recognizes the validity of subjectivistic and naturalistic definitions of value in connection with lower order values ('applied to such specimens of good things as a bar of milk-chocolate or a game of pushpins, they are far more satisfactory than either Brentano's or Moore's definition'),[66] but cautions against extending them to higher order values, among which Ayyub specifically includes: the value for me of my own *total* system of integrated satisfactions, the value for me of other peoples' happiness, value of knowledge and of works of art, and the value of the universe in its 'multifold infinity'. The subjectivist who, for example, sees the meanings of moral judgments in their intended persuasive effect, cannot, according

to Ayyub, answer the question, 'Why are we eager to influence and be influenced in ethical and aesthetic matters?'[67] For him, the thought that I confer value on what I cherish as intrinsically worthwhile is not only emotionally repugnant but epistemologically false, inasmuch as it amounts to a 'repudiation of my most immediate and unshakable experience'. In fact, what is undeniable is that 'I confer value upon myself by developing the capacity to understand and appreciate the values revealed in these spiritual experiences'.[68] Ayyub sees no incompatibility between the fact that 'good' carries an obligatory sense and the fact that it has an objective meaning. It means both. Ayyub's theory of value, in its objectivism and in its emphasis on different orders of values, is closer to Nicolai Hartmann's. Like Hartmann, he rejects a monistic theory of value and opts for a dualistic theory. The dualism is between subjective and objective values, but more aptly, his is a pluralistic theory like Hartmann's.

Rajendra Prasad explicates the distinction between factual and evaluative expressions not by reference to the presence or absence of the referring function (for both kinds of expressions refer on his view), but by reference to the different purposes for which they are used.[69] Both the intuitionists and the positivists are wrong, according to Rajendra Prasad, in supposing that if the two sorts of expressions are to be distinguished, either they must refer to two different sorts of entities, or only the factual expressions and not the evaluative ones, are to be taken as referring. Rajendra Prasad argues for the thesis that the word 'good', for example, does refer to a property, and this property may sometimes even be the same as that to which a factual expression may be used to refer. But this reference does not give the *meaning* of 'good'. In fact, meaning and reference are distinct in the case of most expressions, factual or evaluative. The purpose of an evaluative expression is not to draw attention to the property to which it may refer, but to do something else. Now, although in this paper the specific differences in the purposes are not detailed, it would nevertheless seem that factual expressions may also be used for purposes other than stating facts or drawing attention to them. Even if evaluative expressions are used primarily for other purposes, it does not follow that while they are being so used they are not also essentially being used to refer. Once you do admit the referring function of 'good', as Rajendra

Prasad does, one cannot be so sure that the function is irrelevant for its use as evaluative. The two functions need not be incompatible. In fact, as we found Ayyub arguing, they may be perfectly compatible and may need each other.

The central thesis of Daya Krishna's work on social philosophy[70] is that at least in one area, namely in social thought, the very act of conceiving the nature of society itself is a valuational act. The question, 'What is the nature of society?' is, for Daya, really 'What kind of society would you like to have?'—there being no essence or specific nature of society. To be honest then, the social philosopher ought to make his value-commitments explicit. Now it appears that this thesis of Daya is stronger than two other theses which he also upholds: first, that society itself is a valuational structure, and secondly, that thoughts about society tend to influence the social structure (in a manner and in a sense in which thoughts about nature do not), so that at least in this domain: 'What is conceived to be real also tends to become real.'[71] The truth of these two theses, however, does not entail the radical thesis that society has not a nature of its own, that no purely theoretical study of social reality is possible. A phenomenology of social reality of the sort worked out by Alfred Schutz[72] would refute that radical thesis, but not the other two which Schutz himself would in a large measure accept. Besides, I would raise questions such as the following: What about *my* conceiving of the nature of an alien society to which I do not belong? Does it follow from the fact that my conception of society affects society that this conception is evaluative? That seems to follow simply because thought about non-human reality has already been chosen as the paradigm case of non-evaluative thought. It is encouraging, therefore, to find that at the end of his work Daya does recognize that there is a way for the social scientist to take a value-neutral stance and not to recommend one value rather than another.[73] But this very possibility of taking a value-neutral stance towards alternate value models would seem to threaten the original thesis of the book. Nevertheless, this is the most important work on social philosophy by any contemporary Indian thinker.

In connection with value philosophy, this review cannot but mention a paper by Margaret Chatterjee on aesthetics[74] and a work on phenomenology of religion by J.G. Arapura.[75] Chatterjee wants to bring out differences between art forms from several different

points of view: first, with regard to the status of the perceptual object in relation to the aesthetic object (e.g., the plastic art has the character of 'thatness', as contrasted with the performing arts); second, with regard to the function of 'original' (the word 'original' has a more definite meaning in plastic arts; a more historically conditioned normative sense in the performing arts); with regard to the various ways of being wrong (e.g., the phenomenon of 'not quite coming off' in music); and finally, with regard to 'not being able to see' (e.g., 'aesthetic blindspots'). In each case, she wants to emphasize the concept of family resemblance. Chatterjee also applies her undoubted ability for phenomenological description to the problem of inter-religious communication.[76] By 'inter-religious' communication she means not communication between different religious communities or between different theologies, but communication between an individual of one faith and an individual of another. Propositions like 'God exists', and 'God created the world' do not, according to her, and contrary to many analytic philosophers of religious language, form part of the corpus of religious language at all. What really belong in it are liturgy, hymns and prayers. Chatterjee's problem is: 'Can *X* who is of one faith say to *Y* who is of another faith "I know *what* it means to you"?'[77] She suggests that 'we require a transcendental framework which will provide the grounds of the possibility of inter-religious communication. This framework must needs be attitudinal, far-reaching and enormously demanding, but it has, I would insist, its trancendental aspect'.[78] Some of the conditions of the possibility of 'I know what it means to you' are intellectual and emotional welcoming of diversity, a rejection of the concept of propositional truth and a recognition of existential validity of religious beliefs, an imaginative orientation which enables us to 'read the signs', and a willingness not to be put off by unfamiliarity of style and response of love in the face of the other's 'stoppers'. She does not reject the possibility of translation, and I think rightly argues that a religion is a much less closed system than a language.[79]

Arapura's phenomenology of religion attempts two different, but interconnected things. On the one hand, as a phenomenology it finds some element in the structure of consciousness 'where religion may be demonstrated to repose terminally and finally as far as we can see'.[80] As a comparative study in religions, on the other hand,

it works out a basic typology of religious consciousness. With regard to the former, Arapura distinguishes between reflection that belongs to the essence of consciousness and reflection as a method employed by the phenomenologist.[81] Concentrating on the former, Arapura claims to discover in the structure of consciousness 'a sense of wrongness of existence' in which religion is ultimately rooted. Unfortunately, this part of the thesis is very inadequately worked out and one would look for greater descriptive phenomenology to substantiate the thesis that such a sense of wrongness does belong to the essential structure of consciousness, and to show how it is connected with the phenomenon of reflexivity of consciousness. With regard to the second part of the thesis, his basic typological distinction between anxiety-type consciousness and tranquility-type consciousness, with their different types of inwardness, their differing attitudes towards conscience, guilt, time and history, is worked out with a great deal of detail and insight. On the whole, this is a substantial contribution to the growing literature of phenomenology of religion.

IV

In the area of interpretation of Indian logic, mention must be made of the works of Matilal,[82] Sibajiban,[83] and Staal.[84] Since this by itself is a vast field, I shall confine myself to specific topics rather than to such general issues as whether Nyāya logic is extensional or intensional.[85] The first part of Matilal's *The Navya-Nyāya Doctrine of Negation*, which is entitled 'The Basic Concepts of Navya Nyāya Philosophy', covers some of the ground also covered by Ingalls' chapter on 'Some Theories and Techniques' in his *Materials*;[86] but it also treats some new questions, which are at all points on a logically more sophisticated level. However, since I have reviewed this work in some detail elsewhere, I will take Matilal's more recent work into consideration here and draw attention to two of his important efforts. The first is what he calls the principle of Nesting which, according to him, is used by the Nyāya to repudiate the Buddhist 'impenetrability' principle. We are given two different uses of this principle. According to one, 'If *a* and *b* are two different entities then *a* cannot occupy, at a given time, the same space occupied by *b*, provided one is not nested in, or, does not nest, the other.'[87]

This formulation helps the Nyāya to maintain the thesis that a whole is not a mere aggregate of parts, and to answer some of the Buddhist objections to this concept of the whole. We know how important this is for the Nyāya thesis that a physical object (which is generally a whole) is perceived and for refuting the Buddhist arguments to the effect that the alleged perception of a physical object is really an inference.[88] The other use of the Nesting principle is that each generic property (excepting the highest one which is *sattā* or Being) in Nyāya ontology is nested in a higher generic property—which is Matilal's explication of the very puzzling Nyāya concept of *sāmkaryya*. What is common to these two uses of the principle is that the idea of nesting 'allows two or more different entities, objective realities, to occupy the same spatial spread without violating the "impenetrability principle"'.[89] The other point in Matilal's book to which attention needs to be drawn concerns what he calls the 'implicit Nyāya semantic principle' which states that a simple, non-complex property can never be empty; for this principle he gives us an illuminating interpretation.[90]

It has been usual among writers on Indian philosophy to regard the Nyāya *anumāna* as somewhat like the Aristotelian syllogism, but with two major points of difference: first, the Nyāya insisted on material truth over and above formal consistency; secondly, as a consequence of the first, the Nyāya added to the three Aristotelian terms a fourth, i.e., the example or *dṛṣtānta*, which is to be an agreed locus of co-presence of the *hetu* (or, middle) and the *sādhya* (or, minor). Now Sibajiban's 'The Middle Term' and Staal's paper on *pakṣa* would lead us to modify this understanding at very important points. Sibajiban's paper not only calls into question this reading of the *hetu* or the supposed middle, but also aims at revising the concept of the middle term of the Aristotelian syllogism. Taking up a suggestion from a logical controversy between the Pūrvamīmāṁsā school and the Nyāya, Sibajiban argues that it is *not* necessary to specify a middle term in order to have a syllogism. Instead of

(1) $H \subset M.\ K \subset H.\ \supset K \subset M$

being the form of Barbara, we may have

(2) $(Ea)\ (a \subset M.\ K \subset a) \supset (K \subset M)$

where '*a*' is a class variable, and 'H', 'M' and 'K' are names of

classes. Furthermore, even when we have a specific middle term, 'the special properties of the objects denoted by the middle term are not relevant for the conclusion or for the syllogism'.[91]

Staal's important paper makes the point that '*pakṣa*' of Indian logic is not the minor term of the Aristotelian syllogism. According to Staal, whereas the Aristotelian syllogism has two premises and one conclusion, and all three have the form '*x* belongs to *y*', in the Indian inference, especially the Nyāya inference, there is only one premise :

(3) *hetu* occurs in *pakṣa*

and the conclusion is :

(4) *sādhya* occurs in *pakṣa*

Staal's undoubtedly correct point needs to be supplemented by Sibajiban's finding. In the Indian inference, especially the Nyāya inference, the *real* premise is not (3) but, unpacking the concept of *hetu*,

(5) What is prevaded by *sādhya* occurs in *pakṣa*.

Sibajiban's further point, not mentioned earlier, is now relevant. The real premise, in Indian inference (and he would extend this to the Aritotelian syllogism as well) is not a conjunction of two premises as in (1), but what he calls a 'higher order predication' as in (2).

In other areas of logic perhaps the most important contribution is P.K. Sen's sustained effort to deal with the so-called Paradoxes of Confirmation.[92] Sen's strategy is to reject Hempel's Equivalence Condition ('If an observation report confirms a hypothesis *H*, then it also confirms every hypothesis which is logically equivalent with *H*'). In order to show that the equivalence condition is not valid, Sen introduces the concept of *inductive* equivalence as distinguished from *logical* equivalence. A major point of his argument is that logical equivalence does not entail inductive equivalence. Quite apart from the technical virtuousity of the solution offered,[93] his distinction between the two forms of equivalence is philosophically important. Sen concedes that if two sentences are cognitively equivalent, then they would also be inductively equivalent. But he rejects the thesis that two logically equivalent sentences are *eo ipso* also cognitively equivalent. Logical equivalence is relative to a system.

The 'logical content' of a sentence, according to Sen that is that part of its cognitive content which is taken into account in the system under consideration. What he refuses to accept (and here he certainly is on surer philosophical ground, even if his thesis would not be acceptable to logicians) is that the entire cognitive content of a sentence is conferred by the system to which it may be taken as belonging. Now he has to further clarify his concept of cognitive content. Furthermore, is the part-whole relation appropriate for understanding the relation between logical content and cognitive content? (One is reminded of F.H. Bradley's theory about the relation between logical idea and psychological idea.) Obviously, these questions were not immediately relevant for Sen's purpose, which certainly was not epistemological. Nevertheless, Sen's interest in intensional logic is reflected also in some of his earlier papers, notably in his studies on the concept of entailment.[94]

For contribution to epistemic logic, we turn again to Sibajiban's 'Knowing That One Knows'[95] in which Hintikka's thesis, is critically

$$K_a p \quad K_a K_a p$$

examined. Sibajiban develops a type of epistemic logic with special laws (Hintikka's system had no law peculiar to logic of knowledge, but was only an interpretation of Lewis' S_4) and free from Hintikka's fiction of the rational man. In fact, Sibajiban gives axiom sets for four such systems SKM 1–4. One important advantage of his systems is that whereas Hintikka's logic is from the point of view of an outsider, Sibajiban's systems deal with sentences like '*X* knows that *p*' from the standpoint of *X*, and not from the standpoint of *Y* (where $X \neq Y$). There is no doubt that in doing this Sibajiban derives his basic insight from the discussion of the question of the transparency (*svayamprakāśatva*) of knowledge in Indian philosophy, though the technique he uses is that of modern logic. Rajendra Prasad also attempts contributions to epistemic logic in his 'Interrogative Sentences'.[96] First, Prasad distinguishes between non-cognitive and cognitive (information-conveying) functions in interrogative sentences. Apart from this distinction Prasad speaks of tautologous questions ('Is every bachelor unmarried?') which, according to him, do not yield a contradictory question. He also raises the question whether a contradictory question can be asked. Finally, Prasad suggests how an interrogative sentence is changed by the insertion of the negative

sign. Staal's insistence on the Mîmāṁsā distinction between two kinds of negation in the context of an imperative is also pertinent in this connection.[97]

In philosophy of science, I would refer to the works of C.T.K. Chari,[98] R.K. Shukla,[99] and P.K. Sengupta;[100] and in philosphy of logic to those to those of A.P. Rao.[101] Chari's inquiries range over a wide variety of areas; foundations of quantum mechanics, information theory and cybernetics, computer programming, application of stochastic models to neuro-physiology, and psychical research. In all his studies, his emphasis is on recognizing the value of human personality: on the need of making our descriptions of the universe wide enough to include the observer's own self-knowledge; on contrasting flexible logics and epistemological frameworks so as to take care of the infinite range of human experience; on the limits of machine translatability with reference to the complex problems of 'shared experience', polysemy and oligosemy; and on the vulnerability of an irreducible irreversibility in the laws of physics and the consequent limitations of information-theoretical approach.

V

The Indian philosopher, irrespective of the philosophical problem or movement or methodology he may happen to be concerned with, cannot but be concerned with how to relate himself to his tradition. Now it is no longer—as it was the case through the first half of this century—a matter of expounding the treasures of Indian thought to the western audience, lay or philosophical. Also, it is not a case of finding in Indian thought systems, ideas, and movements similar to those to be found in the west. It is rather a problem of interpreting and appropriating into one's own philosophical present that tradition. Inevitably, modern scholars are groping for new ways. In an important paper Daya challenged the historical veracity and validity of the oft-repeated cliché that Indian thought was a means to spiritual salvation.[102] Attempts have been made to interpret the major trends in the Indian tradition either from the point of view of analytic philosophy[103] or from the point of view of the phenomenological movement.[104] Such efforts run the risk of imposing a methodological framework on seemingly alien material. It may be as futile to look for common characteristics of Indian

philosophy in general, as to try to characterize the entire spectrum of western philosophy. In both cases, there is a great deal of internal diversity to take care of. A fruitful approach may be to look into specific problem areas and specific concepts; or, to study the thoughts of specific individual philosophers rather than the views ascribed to schools. This review will desist from illustrating these suggestions which obviously fall outside its scope.

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22
Phenomenology in Indian Philosophy

I

Edmund Husserl's *Phenomenology* has not only given rise to a long series of most interesting and penetrating philosophical analysis, but also to much self-reflection on the part of philosophers. Husserl's insistence on the idea of a presuppositionless philosophy, as also on the necessity of 'radical reflection upon the meaning and possibility of its own scheme' ought to be taken as a finger post against speculative construction. And in his insistence, too, on the new phenomenological *Einstellung* as also on the necessity of *Wesensschau*, Husserl is only taking us back to the original spirit of philosophy in all lands, in Plato as also in the Orient. Philosophy is a spiritual act and not a static world-view. That is the inner meaning of Platonic Dialectics, of the Cartesian Meditations as also of Kantian transcendental reflection.

It is only quite natural, therefore, to expect that the great philosophies of ancient India should exhibit phenomenological investigations of high order. And the expectation stands fulfilled. Only, it has been unfortunate that little notice of this aspect has so long been taken by Indian scholars in their attempts to place Indian philosophy in the perspective of the Western philosophies. As a result, the dynamics of philosophical thought has been lost sight of. And what we have been given has only been a table of parallel world-views on either side. A world-view, however, is not philosophy. Philosophy is an activity, progressively leading on to new truths. What comparative philosophy can best do is to trace parallel lines of progress, parallely-motived dynamics of thought.

The attempt, therefore, to trace phenomenology in the Indian philosophies is only very likely to bring out the inner dynamics of

reflection that have been buried deep under ages of superficial formulation.

Within the limits of the present paper, we can only suggest a few important lines of investigation that the present author has followed[1].

It may, at the outset, be kept in mind that the etymological meaning of the Sanskrit synonym for Philosophy (=*Darśana*) is "seeing".

II

We may start with the Indian school of logic known as the Nyāya school. A phenomenological Logic has a task of great magnitude. It must avoid the opposite extremes of psychologism and Logistics. Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* lay down the task of the new logic as consisting in the determination of the pure meaning-categories and of the pure object-categories, and also of the laws of such categories.

The Nyāya school of logic is a category-analysis. The categories are called *padārthas* (*pada*=term; *artha*=meaning). It is obvious that they are meaning-categories. The common feature of all these categories is that they are 'knowable', that is, that they are 'intentional Gegenstände' of cognitive acts[2]. And the categories are a priori, not in the sense of being subjective, but in the sense of objective pervasive features (=essences) of the empirical world. They are not deduced: but the Nyāya logician attempts to bring them before the clear vision of the reader. Attempts are made at precise 'description' of these categories. We say 'description', because the *lakṣana* in the Nyāya is hardly equivalent to logical definition. Definition, in the logical order, is prior to the defined; but the Nyāya logician places the *Lakṣya* (here the categories) before the *lakṣana*, which implies that once the category is held before the *Wesensschau*, the attempt at a precise descriptive formulation is all that is necessary. Such attempts at essential descriptive formulation have been carried to immense complexities in the analysis of the school of the Neo-Naiyāyikas, who flourished after the thirteenth century. Thus "essential" descriptions have been attempted of perception, inference, negation etc. The essential structure of inference has been, with great skill, analysed. Particularly instructive in this context, is the Nyāya doctrine of relation. A theory of universal realism is maintained, under which all relations are held to be objective. As the philosophic

'glance' moves from one side to the other, newer and newer relations are 'discovered'.

Thus the Nyāya logic is neither deductive like the Aristotelian nor psychological like that of Mill. In the study of inference, for example, the Indian logicians have nothing corresponding to the Aristotelian or the medieval analysis of the Figures and Moods of syllogism. On the other hand, they have attempted to decipher the structure of an inference and to give a precise, intuitive description of it. It is interesting that Croce of all western philosophers recognized this 'material' aspect of Indian Logic. The idea of a 'material' a priori may be discovered by a discerning reader.

All this may be, in itself, a small step; but such ideas are the forerunners of phenomenology in the same sense in which Brentano's concept of intentionality was.

III

In the post-Husserlian period, phenomenology has developed in diverse directions. But the two most outstanding developments have been: firstly, Husserl's own later development of a Transcendental Phenomenology of Pure Consciousness; and secondly, phenomenological analysis of the problem of Existenz by Heidegger.

Analysis of the problems of sorrow, human loneliness and death in their relation to human existence are found in Buddhism. Indeed, modern existentialism is as old as Buddhism[3]. In the present essay, we do not intend to develop this point. On the other hand, what interests us is the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl, a development in which Husserl stands alone.

When all transcendence is bracketed, we are left with consciousness as such, in the absolute purity of its intrinsic nature. Distinction is made between psychological subjectivity and transcendental subjectivity. The psychological subject is as much 'transcendent' as the natural world outside; 'only transcendental subjectivity has ontologically the meaning of Absolute Being', whereas, the real world has its reality 'only as the intentional meaning-product of transcendental subjectivity'[4]. Phenomenology is the study of the immanent structures of this pure consciousness. That consciousness has such an intrinsic nature of its own cannot be recognized in a naturalistic attitude, directed to the object-world. The phenomeno-

logical 'Einstellung' requires us to withdraw our attention from the object-world step by step towards the realm of pure consciousness itself. These steps are important, because therein is involved the whole dynamis of thought, without which the talk of pure consciousness becomes a logical play, as it did become with the Neo-Kantians. From the 'known' we are to divert our attention to the 'knowing' itself, from the 'perceived' to the 'perceiving', from the 'judged' to the 'judging' and so on. 'Knowing', 'perceiving', 'judging' etc. are not psychological processes but noetic functions. The result is what we may call a transcendental psychology. Transcendental phenomenology must be transcendental psychology in this sense before reaching its final goal of the region of pure consciousness; but this pure consciousness, even when unattained, remains the constant background of this phenomenological investigation.

Clear sketches of such transcendental psychology are found in the Sāṁkhya, the Yoga, and in the Vedānta. Indeed, the psychological basis of these systems is seldom empirical and hence to the superficial reader appears to be unmeaning. The ultimate principle in each of these systems is the pure consciousness itself and the dynamis of thought seems to have often the motive of withdrawing the attention from the object-world and fixing it upon this region of pure consciousness. The withdrawal and attainment cannot be catastrophic and must have to pass through successive stages. Hence the need of a description of these successive stages and this constitutes the underlying motive of the transcendental psychology. The *tanmātras* (subtle-physical), the *indriyas* (or the senses conceived not as sensing in the psychological sense, but as the corresponding pure noetic functions), the *manas* (or the mind similarly conceived), the *ahamkāra* (the Ego), the *buddhi* (or the reflecting consciousness) and *Cit* (or pure Consciousness itself) are the successive stages. Elaborate details have been worked out regarding their modes of functioning and their inter-relations, but all in the same initial context, without which all these discussions seem meaningless.

Indeed, it is interesting to see how in the Sāṁkhya, an evolutionary ontology has been made subordinate to the phenomenological motive. Conceived as a purely naturalistic evolutionary ontology, the terminology of the Sāṁkhya becomes unmeaning. The two ultimate principles in the Sāṁkhya ontology are the Prakṛti (the unmanifest Matrix of all evolutes), and Puruṣa (the conscious subject).

Neither is Prakṛti material nor is Puruṣa psychological. Psychological subjectivity (with its three functions of mind, ego and intelligence) is an evolute from Prakṛti; but Puruṣa, the ultimate Conscious principle is the pure Consciousness—transcendental subjectivity. The successive evolutes are described in a language borrowed from conscious functions, and their ontological interpretation has proved difficult. Confusion between individual psychology and cosmic evolution has been a common charge. We believe that in the present context and in this context alone, the motive of the Sāṁkhya is intelligible. The motive is phenomenological and hence the consequent subordination of ontology to phenomenology[5] A detailed analysis of the Sāṁkhya concepts is possible on this basis.

The Vedānta has also a metaphysical motive; but it is phenomenology that predominates. Indeed the history of the Vedānta during the period following its great formulator Śaṁkara falls into two main camps, which we can here differentiate as follows. The one emphasises the logical-ontological aspect; the other and the more orthodox school emphasizes what we would like to call the phenomenological aspect. And the history of the Vedānta also contains enough evidence for the only too well known fact that the logico-ontological aspect developed only when the Vedānta as a philosophical school had to stand up and defend its own against the attacks of the Buddhists and the dualist. But to understand the Vedānta only through its dialectics is to miss its true and inner essence. The Vedānta's 'Brahman' is rather the transcendental subjectivity of Kant or Husserl than the all-inclusive Absolute of Hegel or Bradley. It is Pure consciousness, rather than an all-inclusive existence. It is to be realized in inner reflections rather than in a synthesis of naturalistic cognitions. Philosophy is descriptive of this inner reflection (in all its dynamis and also in its goal) rather than a logical construction out of scientific data. Original Vedānta is phenomenological; later Vedānta is metaphysical.

Husserl comes to a position very much alike the Vedānta's. Let us quote from Husserl himself. On the one hand, 'Consciousness, considered in its "purity", must be reckoned as a self-contained system of Being, as a system of Absolute Being, into which nothing can penetrate, and from which nothing can escape, which has no spatio-temporal exterior, and can be inside no spatio-temporal system, which cannot experience causality from anything nor exert causality

upon anything.... On the other side, the whole spatio-temporal world, to which man and the human Ego claim to belong as singular subordinate realities is according to its own meaning mere intentional Being, a Being therefore which has the merely secondary, relative sense of a Being for a Consciousness. It is a being, which consciousness in its own experience posits, and is, in principle, intuitable and determinable only as the element common to the motivated appearance-manifolds, but over and beyond this, is just nothing at all'[6].

And the relation between the two worlds is such that consciousness as such does not require any real thing at all[7]. But how then what is absolute in itself can abandon its immanence and take on the character of transcendence? Husserl's answer is : 'Only through the empirical relation to the body does consciousness become real in a human and animal sense, and thereby does it win a place in Nature's space and time—the time which is physicallly measured'.[8]

Students of the Vedānta will recognize the Vedāntic[9] note in all these. The great Vedāntist Śaṁkara begins his famous commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras by formulating this fundamental distinction between Immanence and Transcendence, between consciousness as such and all that, by its very nature has the status of 'intentional' being. In Śaṁkara's imagery, it is like a distinction between light and darkness.

This is about the idealism of both. But even in the working out of many other details, in the inner movement of thought, much material of phenomenological interest is there. For example, the Vedāntic literature abounds in phenomenology of perception, of dream, of sleep and of the illusory experiences. To explore these treasures and to get at the original motive is a task of great magnitude as well as of immense interest[10]

IV

The present study can not be closed without a reference to two great contemporary Indian philosophers—Sri Aurobindo and Professor K.C. Bhattacharyya.

The innumerable writings of Sri Aurobindo are of phenomenological interest from two points of view.

Firstly, Sri Aurobindo[11] is a mystic and as such his writings

abound in inexhaustible materials which may be taken as constituting a phenomenology of mysticism. Inner experiences are analysed and described with superb skill and ability. And what is more, differences in philosophical theories are traced to basic differences of such inner experiences.

Secondly, Sri Aurobindo maintains a theory of various levels of intuition, a position which distinguishes phenomenology from positivism and rationalism alike.

K.C. Bhattacharyya's work[12] is philosophical and also phenomenological in the stricter sense. It is almost surprising to note to what extent Professor Bhattacharyya's work *The Subject as Freedom* approaches Husserl's Ideas, considering the fact that Professor Bhattacharyya's lectures were delivered in 1929, whereas the first English translation of Husserl's work appeared in 1931.

K.C. Bhattacharyya starts from a basic distinction between (i) the meaning-category and (ii) the self-evident. The meaning-category permeates the 'objective knowing attitude'. The motive is an escape from 'the objective knowing attitude' by 'spiritual cultivation of the subjective attitude'[13]. Metaphysics cannot effect this, for metaphysics is concerned only with what is 'meanable'. There can be no metaphysics of the subject. The claim of psychology is as spurious, the attitude equally objective.

A distinction is then drawn between Psychological Introspection and Spiritual Introspection. 'Psychological introspection is at least awareness of the known-ness of the object, the known-ness being meant as an accident of the object, as an abstraction from the known object, as the difference between the object as known and the object that is only believed, or as the object coming to be known'[14]. On the other hand, 'The distinguishing of the subjective function of "knowing" etc., as other than this abstraction of objectivity'[15], writes Professor Bhattacharyya, 'may also be called introspection, and it may be, with greater right'. The latter is spiritual introspection and is also Husserl's phenomenological reflection. The result will be a new spiritual discipline—'a new philosophical study which may be called spiritual or transcendental psychology'[16]. This new study will describe the self-evident. This is also Phenomenology[17].

We have given only a bare sketch of a proposed study. We believe it will be of interest not only to those interested in Indian philosophy but also to the phenomenologists alike. This may also add to their

confidence in the inner value of phenomenology in so far as it embodies the original method of philosophizing—original in the temporal sense as also in the philosophical sense.

NOTES

1. The present author already started this work two years back in his study on 'Husserl's Phenomenology and Indian Idealism' (*The Philosophical Quarterly*, India, Vol. XXIV. No. 3).
2. Cp. *Bhāsāparicheda* by Viśvanātha, Karika 13.
3. Cp. *Proceedings of the Indian Philosophical Congress 1950*, Professor Radhakrishnan's presidential address.
4. *Husserl's Ideas*, English Transl. by Boyce Gibson p. 21, authors preface to the English edition.
5. On the possibility of such a subordination of ontology to phenomenology, compare Husserl's chapter on 'Das Verhältnis von Phänomenologie und Ontologie', particularly on 'Einbezogenheit der Ontologie in die Phänomenologie' (Drittes Kapitel, *Ideen 111*, Husserliana Band V, The Hague, 1952).
6. *Husserl's Ideas*, English Translation, p. 153.
7. Ibid., p. 151.
8. Ibid., p. 164.
9. *Adhyāsa Bhāṣṁya* by Śaṁkara.
10. Cp. a recent attempt by an Indian scholar in this direction: P.J. Chowdhury: *Phenomenology in the Vedānta* (The Prabuddha Bharata, India, 1952).
11. Major writings of Sri Aurobindo include *The Life Divine, Human Cycle, Letters of Sri Aurobindo* etc.
12. The most important amongst Professor Bhattacharyya's published works are: *Studies in Vedantism* (Calcutta), *The Subject as Freedom* (Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, Bombay), 'Concept of Philosophy' (in the volume *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, edited by Radhakrishnan and Muirhead).
13. *The Subject as Freedom*, p. 28.
14. Ibid., p. 19.
15. Ibid., p. 30.
16. Ibid., p. 28.
17. The concept of 'Function' thus comes to be the central point as well of phenomenology (Husserl-*Ideas*, p. 252) as also of Professor

Bhattacharyya's transcendental psychology. Functional study means for Husserl how 'objective unities of every region and category are consciously constituted'. For Professor Bhattacharyya, the functions represent 'the modes of freedom from the corresponding psychological abstractions'. For a comparison, see the present author's study 'Husserl's phenomenology and Indian Idealism' (*The Philosophical Quarterly*, India, vol. XXIV).

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Phenomenology and Indian Philosophy: The Concept of Rationality

There are philosophers, admittedly great, whose works challenge you endlessly to focus on them—interpreting their thoughts takes hold of you as an unending philological and philosophical task. Aristotle and Kant are such philosophers. There are others, also admittedly great philosophers, whose work releases you to go your own way, whose demand upon you is not to interpret their texts but to follow a path laid down, in an exemplary manner, in their writings. Husserl is such a philosopher.

I began reading Husserl in 1949—picking up a copy of the Boyce Gibson translation of *Ideas* from the library of that indefatigable scholar Rash Vihary Das. Almost forty years of preoccupation with Husserl has—as I look back, I find—set me free to relate to other traditions and other schools of philosophy. Being a 'Husserlian' of a sort, I have not found my access to other philosophies blocked. On the contrary, what is distinctive about the Husserlian path—this being an openness to phenomena, to the given *qua* given, to the intended meanings precisely as they are intended—challenges you to face up to the task of understanding the other, the other culture, the other philosophical school, the other person. While it has been a long and arduous process trying to understand and appropriate the Husserlian *opus*, the more I have succeeded in it, the freer I have felt to relate myself to the thoughts of the others. I would like to amplify this, on some other occasion, with reference to other modes of philosophizing within the Western tradition. On this occasion, I will briefly outline how Husserlian thinking has helped me to understand and interpret the Indian philosophical tradition—in this case, not an other, but I myself.

Had I set out then to explore the 'similarities' and the 'differences' between phenomenology and Indian philosophy, I would have

found such features with no great effort, but that finding would have been of no greater value than instituting similar comparisons of Indian philosophy with some other philosophical systems—even if we leave out of consideration the fact, often lost sight of, that Indian philosophy itself, not unlike Western philosophy, is a large field containing highly differentiated internal structure. What the Husserlian mode of thinking provides us with, is not an effective tool for doing what is called 'comparative philosophy', but rather for understanding the other's point of view as a noematic structure and then to go behind it in order to lay bare the experiential phenomenon that is embodied in this structure. The same holds good of phenomenology itself.

SKETCH OF A THEORY TO OVERCOME RELATIVISM

Let me begin by formulating my general approach against the background of what may be called the problem of relativism.[1] The all too familiar cultural relativist, if he is a Westerner, tells us that the Oriental, the Indian or the Chinese, or for that matter, any other 'radically different' community does not do 'philosophy' *in that sense* in which the idea of philosophy was originally instituted by the Greeks. 'Philosophy', along with its implied concept of rationality, is typically Western. If the Hindus or the Buddhists did something they today call philosophy, that is not philosophy in the standard Western sense; their concept of rationality is radically different from the Western. What they call 'their logic' is not 'ours', these 'logics' differ not as Aristotelian from that of the *Principia Mathematica*, but so radically that the same word 'logic' can only be used at the risk of equivocation. It is not uncommon to say that the Orientals did not *think*, that they did not raise their intuitions to the level of 'concepts', that their philosophies are in fact religions (and that their religions are intuitive, aesthetic, not conceptual), and so on and so forth. This raises the large epistemological problem: how can we have access to their thought-worlds save by 'translating' them to ours, which would entail 'transforming' them into our 'constructs' or 'interpreting' them in our terms? As soon as one poses this question, one realizes that the extreme relativism of 'radically different' conceptual frameworks leads, by its internal dialectic, to the denial of such relativism and to the position, argued for by

Davidson,[2] that there is but our home language and other languages translatable into ours. If we are to understand the other, we must share his framework; if there are different frameworks, different 'worlds', different concepts of 'rationality', we cannot understand them. Could there be a middle ground between these extremes? Could it be that there are *other* worlds' *other* modes of thinking, others in the genuine sense, which are yet accessible to us, not because we all are the same, but because (i) we can also transcend our own 'worlds', (ii) our 'worlds' however different nevertheless have overlapping contents, and (iii) a common identical world is in the process of being constituted by such overlapping contents and by the reflective process of trying to make sense of each other. Husserl deals with this situation at the level of the ego problematic in the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, and moves on, briefly in sections 56 and 58, to the constitution of higher levels of other cultural worlds. Taking my cue from these and other ideas of Husserl let me suggest—somewhat briefly and seemingly dogmatically here—that: (i) although each of us and each culture has its own 'worlds', it is possible philosophically to reflect on one's world, and thereby to transcend one's world-boundedness and to assume, in the Husserlian jargon, the stance of a transcendental ego; (ii) as a transcendental ego, I can 'apperceive' the other ego as existing in the mode there 'such as I should be *if I were there*'[3]; (iii) I can now understand his world as a sense-structure, constituted by subjective experiences of an eidetic sort, i.e., can establish an eidetic correlation between a noematic achievement and noetic acts, both on eidetic levels; and (iv) finally realize that to say that these 'world-noemata' are *of* one and the same world is equivalent to saying that the identity of the world is an identity in and through these differences, in the process of being constituted through (v) intercultural understanding, translation and communication, which always rests upon (vi) the increasingly recovered ground of overlapping contents, but always preserving the otherness of the other.

THE INDIAN CONCEPT OF RATIONALITY

Confronted with the historicist-relativistic pronouncements of much of modern thinking, one is left wondering if the Indian concept of rationality was radically different from the Western or not. A

concept of rationality of a culture is a highly stratified concept, and in any case a higher order concept whose field consists in lower order concepts of various levels. To determine a concept of rationality, one needs to consider: first, what makes a belief acceptable for a culture; secondly, what makes a course of action commendable, and, finally, what makes a work of art beautiful. The criteria and principles involved in these operate first of all in the life-world of the community concerned, then in the higher order decisions by the scientists, law-givers and artists, finally in the theoretical discourse of the philosophers. It is to the last that I turn here.

For a brief sketch, the following structure may suffice. For almost all Indian philosophers, the ultimate ground for all evidence, the source for all 'establishment' (*siddhi*), is consciousness (*cit*)—without which no 'being' or 'non-being' could be asserted or denied and there would be 'universal darkness' (*jagadāndhyprasaṅga*). However, this consciousness is 'neutral' as against truth and falsity, it establishes both. Though a necessary condition, it is not sufficient for establishing truth (*pramā*). For this latter purpose, the Indian philosophers, in different ways, take recourse to a theory of *pramāṇa*. *'Pramāṇa'* means *both the specific cause* of truth cognition and also the means of validating or justifying cognitive claims. Every philosophical system in the Indian tradition developed a theory of *pramāṇa* to begin with, which is, at the same time, (a) a theory of *causal* genesis of true cognition and (b) a theory of *justification* of cognitive claims.[4] It appears, then, as though these thinkers solved the problem that has led to such a quandary in Western thinking: the problem, namely, of how to relate the two spaces—the causal space and the logical space.[5] To put it this way is to clearly highlight a fundamental difference between Husserlian thinking and Indian philosophy—a difference to which I propose to return later in this essay. For the present, to continue the general structure of the Indian concept of rationality. To complete this schematic account, I must add a third component (besides the theory of consciousness and the theory of *pramāṇa*) the theory of action. For all Indian thinkers, cognition issues in practical, actional response, and the ultimate *guarantee*, for most of them, of the truth of a cognition is practical *success*. A rational belief is one that is appropriately caused, justified by an appropriate *pramāṇa* and leads to successful practice—all three testified by self-evidencing consciousness.

Theory of Consciousness

Husserlian phenomenology guided my search into Indian thinking about consciousness. There are three major components of Husserlian thinking about consciousness: intentionality, temporality and the absolutely foundational—evidencing and constitutive—role of consciousness. Accordingly, I looked at Indian thinking on these matters from these three perspectives.

Intentionality The thesis of intentionality itself has two parts: that consciousness is always directed towards an object, and—since the intentional object may or may not exist—that every conscious state has a co-relative sense or meaning. The first has been a matter of great disputation amongst Indian philosophers (the realists such as the Naiyāyika and the Mīmāṁsakas ascribing to consciousness an intrinsic object-directedness (*svābhāvika viṣayapravanatva*) and the 'spiritual' (*ādhyātmika*) philosophies insisting on the intrinsic objectlessness (*nirviṣayakatva*) of consciousness). It could at least be said that the Brentano thesis would not have been accepted by the Indian philosophers as though it were a self-evident truth. That the empirical states of consciousness are object-directed was not the point at issue. The issue was: whether the same, or similar, object-directedness could also be ascribed to consciousness even when the latter is 'purified', in Husserlian terms, from all 'naturalistic' adjuncts (*upādhi*). Here one finds a whole array of views in between the two extremes mentioned above, of which at least one is worth mentioning: this is the yogācāra Buddhist's view that the *ālambana* (or 'the objective-causal support') of perception is not the so-called external reality, but an internal, cognizable form (*antarjñeya-rūpa*), so that the cognitive act has its own internal objective form.[6]

As regards the theory of sense, the Indian philosophers have by and large preferred a theory of direct reference, their theory of meaning being generally speaking a *referential* theory. In such a theory, as is easy to appreciate, the mediation by sense is uncalled for. However, looking for a theory of sense, one discovers it at unsuspected corners: at those places where the concept of reference is called into question (as in Buddhist *apoha*-theory) or where belief in eternity of 'word' led them to posit eternal meanings (as in some versions of the *sphoṭa* theory).

In addition to these two questions, Indian philosophers came to

focus on two other related issues: does consciousness have a form (*ākāra*) of its own, or does its apparent form really derive from that of its object? The Buddhist who held that the 'objective support' (*ālambana*) is an internal cognizable form of a state of consciousness was, in fact, saying that consciousness has its own intrinsic form (a sensation of blue is 'blue', blue belongs to this sensation not as its color but as its form).[7] The realists such as the Naiyāyikas and the Mīmāṁsakas defended the opposite view that consciousness of blue and consciousness of yellow differ not with repect to any intrinsic form of each, but only with respect to their objects which squarely and entirely fall outside them. Consciousness as such is formless (*nirākāra*). Thus you have either a complete realism (the object is totally independent of consciousness (which only 'reveals' it) or an idealism (for which the object is but a form internal to consciousness)[8]—but is there a theory of constitution? It is true that consciousness provides the ultimate *evidence* for all cognitive claims, but this evidencing role does not amount to the constituting role as it does with Husserl. To this last point I will return soon.

Temporality That our conscious life is caught up in time is a truism. The point about Husserl's thesis regarding the temporality of consciousness should not be identified with this truism. It rather consists in the much more significant contention that even after the entire natural world with its spatiality and temporality is placed under brackets, consciousness as the 'phenomenological residuum' and so as 'purifed' and as transcendental, is still temporal, and, furthermore, that this latter temporality of consciousness is the constitutive source of all other conceptions of time—of the objective time of nature and of the time of history. Does Indian thought, with its large concern with the inner life of consciousness, come to recognize the temporality of consciousness in this sense? This is a question which is very difficult to answer. There is no doubt that the Indian conception of time is heavily cosmological, and by and large, consciousness, in its pure, non-empirical nature, is kept outside of the sphere of temporality. Whether there are not places, as possibly in Yoga or in Buddhism, where consciousness's intrinsic, non-objective temporality comes to the forefront, is a question which I am not now in a position to answer.[9]

Consciousness as Absolute, Constituting Transcendental Foundation
One immediate reason why some of us found Husserl's *Ideen* I (in Boyce Gibson's translation) so captivating—and I read *Ideas* before I came to read the *Logical Investigations*—is that, trained mainly as I was in the overwhelmingly Vedāntic tradition of the University of Calcutta,[10] the idea of transcendentally purified consciousness as a self-enclosed, absolute realm of being had immediately a familiar ring. But it also became increasingly questionable if the pure consciousness (called *brahman*) of Vedānta, absolute and foundational though it is conceived to be, can be said to be constitutive of the domains of empirical realities as well as of abstract idealities. Especially in the Advaita Vedānta tradition, consciousness does nothing, it simply manifests, reveals, illuminates or evidences. The domain of objects—real or ideal, the mundane order, that is to say, is neither created by a Godhead nor an emanation of *brahman*, but an unreal other for which *avidyā* or ignorance (or *Māyā*, in the standard usage, cosmic ignorance) is held responsible. A non-intentional, non-temporal, non-actional consciousness cannot constitute. It is the foundation (*adhisthāna*) of the world-appearance, but it does not bring the world about in any sense—theological or phenomenological. Those who rejected the Advaita theory of a non-actional consciousness, and wanted *brahman* to be the source of the world, resorted either to the theory of creation of a sort (*sṛṣṭi*) or to a theory of emanation. This meant construing consciousness as a force, as an energy, i.e., *cit-śakti* (as, e.g., in Śaivism and, in modern times, by Sri Aurobindo)—which does inject a certain intentionality into the texture of consciousness—but still stops short of a constitution theory for reasons that lie deep within the structure of Indian thinking. As far as I understand the issues now, these reasons lie in (i) the non-availability of a theory of *sense* (as distinguished from reference), and (ii) an ontologically oriented mode of thinking. Phenomenological constitution is constitution of *sense*, not constitution of the thing itself (but certainly of the sense 'thing itself'). With a theory of sense not around, theory of constitution would become either a theory of evidence (that is to say, of how things are evidenced, known, manifested) *or* a theory of real origination (that is to say, of how things come into being). The former gives epistemology (i.e., a theory of *pramāṇa*), the latter a causally oriented ontology (i.e., a theory of *prameya*). Phenomenology is also a theory of evidence, phenomenological constitution also a theory of evidence,

an account of how *senses* come to givenness, and through senses things, but this evidencing function is not simply epistemological but also transcendental (in the Kantian sense of being the condition of the possibility of transcendent reference). Consciousness as an absolute domain of being, also as the foundational being, is recognized, but not as the constitutive source of all transcendence.

Thus Indian philosophical literature abounds in a descriptive phenomenology of consciousness (recall the Buddhist classification of cognitions, the Sāṁkhya-yoga theory of the various kinds of mental states (*citta-vṛtti*), the Vedānta theory of the various 'real or apparent' modalities of consciousness); but these do not—save possibly in certain Buddhist theories—amount to transcendental-constitutive phenomenology. They oscillate between descriptive psychology and metaphysics of consciousness.

THEORY OF PRAMĀṆA

I have already noted that the theory of *pramāṇa* incorporates into its body the causal and the logical orders in one. This limits the ideality of the logical and the contingency of the causal—as it must if the two orders are to coincide. In this again, as in the theory of consciousness, ontology prevails. Husserlian phenomenology begins with rescuing the logical from being submerged in the flow of mental life: the ideality of the logical is made to stand out in contrast with the causal order of the psychological. It ties in with the theory of *sense* at one and the conception of pure form on the other—both essential possibilities within Western thought. On both counts, Indian thought moves along a different path.

Perception (Pratyakṣa) In the theory of *pramāṇa*, one *pramāṇa* occupies an undisputed place: perception (*pratyakṣa*). Perception is the beginning of cognition, other forms of cognition are founded on it. As the logician Gaṅgeśa put it, it is 'not caused by any other *cognition*' (*jñānākaraṇakam jñānam*), the *first* in the cognitive hierarchy. Though initially it is sought to be defined in terms of the causality of sense-organs, that definition becomes less and less important. The Jainas want to characterize perception by the 'immediacy' and the 'clarity' (*vaiśadya*) of the cognition; both these concepts however are vague. Immediate perceptions are mediated by relational structures of varying degrees of complexity (as *Uddyotakara*, the great Naiyāyika, first

showed). In effect, the scope of perceptual cognition was much larger than it has been in the Western tradition. While visually perceiving this blue pencil as this blue pencil—i.e., while having a perceptual cognition that is verbally articulated as 'this blue pencil'—I am—on the Nyāya theory which was largely taken over by many other schools—seeing not only (i) this yonder object, but also (ii) the this-ness inhering in it; not only (iii) the blue colour but also (iv) the blueness inhering (not in the pencil but in the blue colour-particular); not only (v) the pencil, but also (vi) the generic property 'pencil-ness'; and not only these relata (i) through (vi) but also relations that tie them together into one complex entity. Thus, on this theory, the universals are perceived (not by any sort of intellectual, rational, intuition) but precisely by the instrumentality of the same sense organs which mediate perception of the particular instances. So also are relations. Recall the suspicions and criticisms that were evoked by Husserl's extension of the concept of 'seeing' to eidetic insight. The Nyāya theory would have been more receptive to such an extension.

Let me take up one particular aspect of theory of perception which is amenable to an interestingly phenomenological reading. The Buddhists held that our ordinary perceptions are really inferences, because not all the parts of a physical object are presented. On the Buddhist view, a physical object is nothing but an aggregate of parts, and since not all the parts are ever presented, their aggregate is also not presented. What passes as perception, in that case, is really inference from what is given to what is not given. We can really perceive, then, only what is absolutely simple, the pure particular; in effect, true perception is an ineffable experience. The Naiyāyikas argued against this position by asserting (i) that a physical object is not a mere aggregate of parts but a new object that is founded upon the putting together of parts; (ii) that it is not necessary for perceiving this *new* whole that one must be perceiving all its parts and (iii) consequently, that we may be truly perceiving a whole even when not all its parts are presented. One may read here a phenomenological thesis that perception of a part may serve as the basis for arousing expectations of having the other parts presented, that as this perceptual process unfolds each perspectival presentation contains the intention that there is a determinable whole that is being presented through it and that further exploration of the whole

clarifies and progressively fulfills that intention, while all along it is the same whole that was originally intended is being brought to more adequate givenness. What is perceived in any case is a whole—but always *through* some of its parts (and perspectives[11]).

Inference (Anumāna) The Indian *interest* in inference has been cognitive—i.e., as a mode of knowing the world. This has two aspects each of which contrasts sharply with the Western logic. On the one hand, inference is studied as a cognitive process consisting in an ordered series of cognitive episodes. This seemingly psychologistic account contrasts with the Western understanding of inference in terms of propositions as ideal entities (defended by Husserl in the *Prolegomena*). On the other hand, inference is studied as a means of knowing an item in the world, as a consequence of which its truth or falsity, rather than its formal validity or invalidity, is what comes to the forefront—which makes it appear as though Indian logic of inference does not quite raise itself to the level of 'formal logic'.

Husserl's philosophy of logic enables us to have a surer grip on the nature of Indian logic—firstly, by locating it in the context of the issue about psychologism, and secondly, by seeing how empty formalism and the cognitive interest go together. The Indian theory of *anumāna* does tell a story about how inferential cognition takes place, the story is in terms of a rule-governed sequence of cognitive episodes. This story thus apears to be psychologistic. But each cognitive episode was assigned a content, in terms of which its linguistic expression was structured, which is not subjective in the sense in which the episode itself is so. It is this content, shareable by numerically distinct episodes, that is relevant for which sequence of episodes can result in a true inferential cognition. If the reaction against psychologism led, in the *Prolegomena*, to a Platonism of ideal entities, the Indian thinkers rather than detaching the content from the act and assigning it a distinct ontological status, construed the mental itself in a non-psychologistic manner[12]—such that (i) the content of the mental retains an identity across acts and (ii) the temporal sequence of acts, under appropriate causal conditions, leads to an inferential cognition that is 'true'. Thus the rapproachment between psychology and logic was done by logicizing psychology as much as by psychologizing logic: the former by assuming that

the psychological process of reasoning conforms to the logical (any seeming deviance, as in supposedly fallacious reasoning, being due to misconstrual of the premises), and the latter by making logic a logic of cognitions rather than of propositions.

It was again the Husserl of *Formal and Transcendental Logic* who showed the way to embed the formal within an originally cognitively oriented interest. It is not that the Indian theory of *anumāna* does not know of formal validity. In fact, a formally valid mood can be abstracted from a valid Nyāya *anumāna*. But since the interest was in cognitions (and not in either sentences or in propositions), and in *anumāna* as a *pramāṇa*, i.e., as a source of *true* cognition, the merely formally valid inference, as in *tarka* or counterfactuals, was left out of consideration.

Word (Śabda) I will only make some brief remarks about this unique component of the theory of *pramāṇa:* the theory, namely, that there is a variety of cognition that is entirely word-generated (*śabda-janya*). The latter includes not only knowledge of moral rules, spiritual goals and practices, which are derived from reading, interpreting and understanding the scriptural texts, but also such empirical knowledge of the world as is derived from *listening* to the utterances of competent—intellectually and morally competent—speakers (and derivatively from *reading* the writings of competent authors). I will not go into the reasons advanced by the Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā authors as to why such cognition cannot be reduced to either perception or inference and deserves to be recognized as a mode of cognition *sui generis*. I will not also discuss the theory of meaning that underlies this claim—clearly, it is a referential theory of meaning. What I intend to make a few remarks on, is the suspicion that the theory of word-generated cognition, and the important status accorded to it, might undermine the critical nature of the theory of *pramāṇa*. At worst, it appears to be device to justify scriptures, at its best it amounts to stopping the process of critical enquiry by appealing to the competence, and noble intentions, of speaker or of the author. In the context of Husserlian phenomenology, the theory would appear to be deriving a wedge between the claim to know and the need for fulfilling the meaning intention, such that merely *understanding* the sense of the speaker (if accompanied by belief in his competence) is taken in this case to amount to knowing that something is the case.

If strictly Husserlian phenomenology fails to be of help here, it is hermeneutic phenomenology which comes to our aid. If what is crucially at stake is not so much our knowledge of empirical facts which are perceptible, and so inferrable in the ordinary manner (so that the belief generated by the speakers's utterance is capable of being confirmed or disconfirmed by ordinary perception and inference), but our knowledge of moral rules and spiritual goals and means—then the theory of *śabda* has a pretty good case. But, first, let us bear in mind that the charge of uncritically yielding to testimony is superficial and does not cut deep. The theory of *pramāṇa* provides the critical norms, and the question, if a cognitive claim is valid or not is to be judged in the light of these norms. If *śabda* is a *pramāṇa* (under appropriate conditions), then one cannot challenge word-generated cognition as uncritical; that would amount to importing a critical norm that is not in consonance with those of the theory itself. Thus one cannot *prima facie* rule out *śabda*, but has to question, *from within the tradition of Indian philosophy*, if it deserves a place in the list of *pramāṇas*.[13] While the logico-epistemological issue unavoidably is: whether we need to distinguish between *sense* (which is grasped in mere understanding of a sentence) and *reference* (which is grasped in knowing), there are domains such as moral rules where it is through *interpreting* linguistic discourse (and not through any further empirical verification) that one determines what one ought not to do. The point underlying this claim is *not* that one ought to do $\emptyset$ *because* S (a competent speaker or text) says one ought to do $\emptyset$ (for that would be to say that moral rules are inferred from the fact that S has uttered sentences embodying those rules). It is rather the point that we learn the rules only from hearing/reading and interpreting verbal instructions. Note that if an accepted set of moral rules is given up, it is given up by imbibing another set of moral rules on the basis of another set of verbal instructions. In this case, *śabda* corrects *śabda*—as a perceptual error is corrected by another perception. It is through these accepted texts that a tradition is built up, but the tradition is not a monolithic interpretation of the basic texts but leaves room for interpretive differences as well as for new possibilities of interpretation. Thus although the different schools of Indian philosophy moved within the space opened up by the *śruti* texts, these schools realized quite different interpretive possibilities.

Theory of Action

Husserl wanted to overcome scepticism entirely on theoretical-cognitive grounds (although he includes actional elements within the overall structure of theoretical constitution-analysis of certain kinds of objectivities) by founding knowledge on a stratum of self-evidencing cognitive experiences (such as inner time-consciousness or possibly, the *lebendige Gegenwart*). This is what accounts for its characterization as a variety of 'foundationalism'. Indian thinking also is anti-sceptical[14] and anti-relativistic. While *theoretically* cognitive claims are justified with one or more of the *pramāṇas*—the *pramāṇas* themselves owe their 'power' to their ability to generate successful action (*saphalapravṛttijanakatva*). Scholars of Indian thought have been so impressed by the presence of this idea of 'ability to generate successful action' that at least one notable and perceptive scholar has proposed that here in this notion possibly one may locate the *original* Indian understanding of truth,[15] which the different systems conceptualized differently. While this thesis in this form is controversial,[16] it nevertheless remains uncontroversial that the idea of successful action is central, not peripheral, to Indian thinking on cognition. The minimal thesis, in this regard, I think, is stated by Udayana: universal scepticism is limited by contradiction with practice.[17] There is no merely theoretical doubt. Doubt eventually tells on practice,[18] it will arrest the originally unhesitating mode of acting and transform it into either hesitant action or inaction.

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE INDIAN CONCEPT OF RATIONALITY

With this rather highly schematic outline of the concept of rationality in Indian thought, we are in a position to make a few concluding remarks on it in the light of the theory sketched in Part I as well as against the general background of Husserl's phenomenology.

One point stands out clearly: the Indian philosophies are *not* philosophies in a sense that is *radically* different from the sense that was instituted for the Western world by Greek thought. If the idea of pure theory was denied by insisting on the bearing of cognition upon practice, that does not mean—as critics and lovers alike of Indian thought have been prone to insist—that Indian philosophy did not contain theoretical thinking. It was theoretical thinking with an eye on practice—at a certain level, on a possible tranforma-

tion of life, but, to be sure, without ever sacrificing the rigor of thinking. The Hegelian thesis that Indian thinking remained at the level of immediacy and did not rise to the level of conceptual mediation, is equally wrong. The conceptuality of the Indian philosophies, in its sheer conceptuality, parallels that of Western thought, it never mistook immediacy of experience for thinking. However, the two thought-worlds—the Western and the Indian—intersect and overlap: they are neither coincident nor mutually exclusive. The relativist may so sunder them that it would seem impossible to understand the one from the perspective of the other: I have come to the firm conviction that that is just not the case. The absolutist commits the opposite error: he mistakes the task of understanding as simply being one of translation.

After setting aside such general misunderstandings, let me turn to phenomenology. Indian philosophy shares with Husserl the basic thesis that all evidence, and so the ultimate ground of all 'establishment' is consciouness. But Husserl sought after a most radical insight to the effect that all mundane formations, all scientific and everyday structures can, in principle, be shown to be rooted in the structures of consciousness such that the reflecting philosopher can, within his own ego, bring this rootedness to intuitive clarity. This radical thesis of transcendental phenomenology has never showed up in the Indian thought world. As emphasized by me earlier, the foundational consciousness, for Indian thought, is an evidencing and/or grounding consciousness, but not quite a universal-constituting subjectivity.

Thus the laying bare of the rationality of our beliefs and cognitions, of moral rules and artistic creations, confronts, in Indian thought, an absolute limit. The *pramāṇas* 'establish' them, the consciousness evidences this act of establishment, but the judicative authority of the *pramāṇas* is not, and cannot be, traced back to their origin in the structure of that consciousness. What, then, is the source of their authority?

It is at this point that the absolutistic feature of Indian thought exhibits its limits. By 'absolutistic feature' I mean its claim to deliver the nature of reality unaffected by the perspectival character of human thinking or by the temporality and situatedness of the thinker. Philosophy was a science, differing from the empirical sciences only in the order of generality. However, as soon as we turn to the

highly differentiated, internally divided, world of Indian thought, characterized by endless confrontations and mutual rapproachments between parallelly developing schools, each with its own theory of *pramāṇa*, one cannot but ask a question, which the classical philosophers, no matter of which school, never asked: wherefrom does a school, Nyāya or Sāṁkhya or Vedānta or any other, derive its basic concepts, its list of *Pramāṇas* which it so vehemently defends? One cannot trace them back to the *sūtras*, for the *sūtras* only summarized a conceptualization which was already in operation. Perhaps one has to appeal to an anonymous tradition of interpreting the texts! Thus there is an ultimate relativism, an 'either-or', a choice of interpretive tradition. The only absolute behind all this is the tradition with its texts, endowed with a plasticity of meaning which allows such diverse interpretations. This limit of rationality was operative, but never thematized by the philosophers. Now is the occasion to thematize it, and thereby to press relentlessly towards the ground that supports the alternative conceptualizations. I have doubts, however, if this ground would be anything like the Husserlian transcendental subjectivity—if we can find anything but the text, the words of *apauruṣeyaśruti* (the heard but not composed text).

NOTES

1. I have developed this idea in 'Phänomenologischer Rationalität und die Überwindung des Relativismus' in: E.W. Orth (ed.), *Vernuft und Kontigenz*, München: Karl Alber verlag, 1986.
2. Davidson, D., 'On the Very Idea of Conceptual Scheme', in: *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*, 17, 1973/74, pp. 5–20.
3. Husserl, E., *Cartesian Mediatations*' E. tr. by D. Cairns, The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1960, p. 119.
4. Professor B.K. Matilal has emphasized this dual role of the pramāṇas in his *Perception: An Essay on Classical Indian Theories of Knowledge*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, esp. pp. 35–7.
5. The problem goes to Kant's distinction between *quaestio factis* and *quaestio juris*, and has preoccupied such modern authors as W. Sellars, D. Davidson and R. Rorty.
6. Cp. Matilal, *Perception*, p. 362.

7. Cp. M. Hattori, *Dignāga on Perception*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1968.
8. For more on this, see my 'Consciousness and Knowledge in Indian Philosophy', *Philosophy East and West*, 29, 1979, pp. 3–10.
9. For my on-going research into the concept of time in Indian thought, I am indebted to conversations with Aninidita N. Balslev as well as to her own work on that topic.
10. This tradition was built up by such fine scholars as K.C. Bhattacharyya, N.K. Brahman, S.K. Das, Kalidas Bhattacharyya, A.K. Rai Chaudhuri—but most importantly by the incomparable Sanskrit Pandit, Mahāmahopādhyāya Yogendranath Tarkavedantatîrtha.
11. I proposed this reading first in 'Reflections on the Nyāya Theory of *Avayavipratyakṣa'*, *Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy*, I No. 1, pp. 30–41 [later reprinted in my *Phenomenology and Ontology*, The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1970]. Cp. Karl Potter's comments on it in Potter (ed.), *Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology*, Princeton: University Press, 1977, p. 79.
12. For more on this, cp. my 'Psychologism in Indian Logical Theory', in: Matilal and Shaw (eds.), *Analytical Philosophy in Comparative Perspective*, Dordrecht, Reidel, 1985.
13. I devoted my Presidential Address at the 61st session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Calcutta, 1986, to this theme, entitled 'A Critique of the theory of *śabdapramāṇa* and the concept of tradition.
14. On sceptical trends in Indian thought, see B.K. Matilal, *Logic, Language and Reality: An Introduction to Indian Philosophical Studies* (Delhi: Matilal Banarasidas, 1985), Ch. 1 ('Logic and Dialectic in Ancient and Medieval India'); also his *Perception*, Ch. 2 ('Scepticism'). Also see K.N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London, 1963.
15. Karl H. Potter, 'Does Indian Epistermology Concern Justified True Belief', *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 12, 1984, 307–27.
16. Cp. J.N. Mohanty, 'Prāmānya and Workability—Response to Potter', *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 12, 1984, 329–38.
17. 'Vyāghātāvadhirāśankā', *Nyāyakusumāñjali*, 3, 7.
18. Cp. my 'Nyāya Theory of Doubt', *Visva Bharati Journal of Philosophy*, III,, 1966, pp. 15–35. Reprinted in *Phenomenology and Ontology*.

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Phenomenology and Existentialism: Encounter with Indian Philosophy

During the last decades of the nineteenth and the first quarter of this century, Indian philosophers were confronted at first with the grand systems of German idealism, and then with the idealistic positions of the British and American neo-Hegelians. Attempts were made to look back at the systems of Vedānta, for example, through neo-Hegelian spectacles. Today we may say that this confrontation proved sterile. British neo-Hegelianism itself—and it was the British strand of neo-Hegelianism which most preoccupied the Indian philosophers—was a hybrid product of German idealism and British empiricism, and its understanding, for example, of Kant and Hegel was not something to be depended upon. Neither Indian philosophical thinking nor German idealism at its best is as abstract and speculative as it was taken to be: both are deeply concerned with concrete experience. Reflection on experience is not necessarily construction of a system. It may also lead to genuine discoveries of layers and dimensions of experience otherwise unnoticed. Or, reflection may itself generate significant experiences. Development of the phenomenological method has made possible a fresh understanding of the German idealists from Kant to Hegel.[1] It may also be utilized for the purpose of gaining fresh insight into the nature of Indian philosophical thinking in general, and also of specific systems of Indian philosophy.

Confrontation of Indian philosophy with the phenomenological movement is recent and has been merely programmatic (as outlined in the preceding essay)[2]; it has yet to be carried through with the required thoroughness of details. There is a comparatively greater awareness of the significance of existentialism, but even here we lack a systematic breakthrough. The present essay aims at fulfilling

these needs within very modest limits. The essay is divided into four parts. The first part will present some of the main concepts, methodological and contentual, of phenomenology, and the second part will seek to confront Indian philosophy with phenomenology. The third part will attempt a brief statement of existential phenomenology, and then consider it from the standpoint of Indian thought. It may be borne in mind that what is usually called existentialism is in this essay regarded as a variety of phenomenological philosophy, i.e. as 'existential phenomenology'. One advantage of thus looking at existentialism may be to achieve a certain continuity in our presentation as well as in our critical reflections. The fourth part is devoted to modern Indian thought from the same perspective. It may be noted that neither in dealing with phenomenology nor in dealing with Indian philosophy have we aimed at historical adequacy and exhaustiveness. Our purpose has been to isolate those key concepts which are relevant for our critical reflections. Part of what we propose to do is to bring out those elements in Indian systems of philosophy which seem to correspond to the appropriate phenomenological notions. But such seeming correspondence may also hide radical differences which in that case have to be laid bare. We are interested as much in similiarities as in differences, but above all what we should aim at is systematic philosophy and not merely comparative philosophy, doing phenomenology and not merely talking about it.

MAIN THEMES OF PHENOMENOLOGY

The initial success of phenomenology was due to its call to go back to the *Sachen selbst*, the facts themselves. The program of describing facts as they are *given* attracted a generation of thinkers already weary of speculative constructions. But soon it became evident that it was by no means obvious what was meant by 'fact' and also by 'given'. Regarding both questions, early phenomenology found relatively clear but in the long run not fully satisfying answers. A rather curious ambiguity of the word 'fact' showed itself when facts were distinguished from essences.[3] The sort of facts with which phenomenology is concerned was said to be of the latter kind; they are non-empirical, eidetic facts. Phenomenology shall describe such essences. Thus phenomenology became eidetic phenomenology. In

every region of being there are characteristic essential structures which are to be described. There are also formal essences characterizing the 'empty' region of 'something in general'; description of these is the task of formal ontology which is closely connected with formal logic. As to the 'given', the phenomenologist was deeply impressed by the model of sense perception: just as the sensible particular, this tree over there, is itself 'bodily' given in sense perception, so the universal essence is capable of being 'bodily' given in eidetic intuition, in the so-called *Wesensschau*.

In itself, this seems innocuous, though it is also true that the talk of *Wesensschau* led people to associate phenomenology with armchair mysticism. All that Husserl meant is that each type of object has its own original mode of givenness, and that just as empirical, sensible particulars are given in sense-perception, so universals or essences and essential truths are capable of being given in thought that has risen above mere operation with symbols and has based itself on appropriate illustrative intuitive content. Kant had sought to base his rejection of the possibility of speculative metaphysics as a body of knowledge on a total rejection of the conception of intuitive human understanding. Husserl restored the Platonic and Hegelian conception of concrete, intuitive reason, not in support of speculative metaphysics (which he looked upon as being necessarily constructivistic) but as the basis of a descriptive phenomenology which is to replace it. There remain important differences, however, between the intuitive understanding which Kant so vehemently denied to man and the eidetic intuition which Husserl so strongly relied upon. For one, the intuitive understanding which Kant denied to man is characterized by creative spontaneity, whereas the eidetic intuition of Husserl is still receptive in an important sense. For another, Kant's conception wholly dispenses with the need for an empirical basis of non-empirical intuition, while Husserl's does not.

The notion of what is to count as fact for the phenomenologist was thus connected with the notion of givenness. Not only are there different modes of givenness, but there are also different ways of contrasting the various modes. There is in the first place the distinction between adequate and inadequate givenness, and again that between apodictic and non-apodictic givenness. Physical objects, for example, are not capable of being given adequately; they are given always through profiles. Essences, on the other hand—according to Husserl's

early doctrine[4]—are given, if and when they are, adequately. However, neither physical objects nor essences are capable of apodictic givenness: nothing that transcends consciousness is. Consciousness alone seems to be apodictically and also adequately given, though the two notions of givenness have to be kept apart. Yet my consciousness at any moment is not adequately given, as Husserl recognizes, for I have to 'swim aback' in the stream of consciousness. It is apodictic, no doubt, but not absolute. The absolute, the presuppositionless foundation of all knowledge and experience, for Husserl, is the flux of consciousness which, being the source of all temporality, is itself not in time: this is the transcendental subjectivity.

The transition from the particulars to the essences, and from the transcendent essences to the pure, transcendental consciousness, is effected through a methodological device called 'phenomenological reduction'. Particulars are 'reduced' so as to yield essences; all transcendent position is 'reduced' so as to yield the pure transcendental consciousness. We have thus two phases of phenomenological reduction: eidetic and transcendental. In both, there is no denial or rejection of what is bracketed, no explicitly ontological assertion regarding its status, but only a suspension or neutralization of belief with regard to it. There is in this respect a difference, important but easy to be overlooked, between eidetic and transcendental reductions: whereas in the former we simply suspend our belief in so far as the reality or otherwise of the particulars is concerned, in the latter we both neutralize our belief in the world and also 'rediscover' it, with only 'a change of signature', within transcendental consciousness. Hence the famous Husserlian doctrine that all transcendence is constituted in consciousness.

All this hinges upon a notion which is indeed the key concept of most phenomenological systems: the notion of *intentionality*. Directly derived from Brentano's thesis that every psychic state has an intention-object (and no physical state has it), the concept of intentionality undergoes a series of modifications in the hands of Husserl and his successors. Right at the outset, in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl rejects intentionality as a distinguishing property of all mental phenomena, and in fact concedes the existence of non-intentional mental states.[5] The class of psychic phenomena which exhibits this characteristic is circumscribed by the title 'Act', and the notion of consciousness is then sought to be made more

precise by that of 'Act'. In *Ideen I*, the acts or intentional acts are said to be conferring meaning (*Sinn*) on meaningless stuff or *hyle*. This hylomorphic scheme, however, is subsequently abandoned on the ground that it hides a sensationalistic prejudice. The lectures on the phenomenology of inner time-consciousness attempt to lay bare the intentional structure and constitution of what would at first sight appear to be non-intentional hyletic data, whereby the entire conscious life is shown to be intentional in its inner structure. The *Ideen I* lays bare a noetic-noematic correlation within consciousness, according to which every conscious act, taken as an immanent process, has its corresponding transcendent objectivity which it constitutes; all this, however, is done independently of the question as to what does or does not exist out there in the real world.

In so far as for every type of object there corresponds a mode of givenness, since for every noematic character there is an actual or possible noetic act, and further in so far as all thetic and modal properties like 'being', 'actual', 'possible' have their corresponding noetic acts: we could say that every object whatsoever is 'constituted' in consciousness, meaning thereby two different but connected things. In the first place, nexus of noetic acts 'constitutes' an objectivity in the sense that the latter is presented, 'comes into self-evidence' through the former. Also, the object as a constituted unity may serve as a guiding clue for the regressive investigation into the noetic acts which constitute it. In this twofold sense, all objectivities are constituted in consciousness. No ontological commitment as to the reality or unreality, existence or non-existence of the transcendent world is thereby made. Only the *sense* of such ontological assertions is sought to be clarified (in a rather peculiar sense of the word 'clarification').

The notion of intentionality thus serves to bypass and go beyond the classical issue between realism and idealism, and though Husserl characterized his later philosophy as Transcendental Idealism, this characterization does obscure the historic significance of his philosophizing. Various classical motives, no doubt, operate in determining both the form and the content of Husserl's thought: the Cartesian search for the indubitable absolute foundation of knowledge and the Kantian transcendent method being the chief amongst them. However, we cannot for that reason overlook the distinctive feature of his thought, even of his later thought. Two points may here be

emphasized: for Kant, the 'transcendental' is opposed to and contrasted with the 'empirical'; in Husserl the basic contrast is that between the 'premundane' and the 'mundane'. The transcendental is progressively regarded as the pre-mundane.[6] Further, for Kant 'transcendental' remains primarily an adjective for a method, a *Betrachtungsweise*; for Husserl it designates a region of being, a *Wirklichkeit*.[7]

Husserl's attitude to the problem of the ego may briefly be recapitualated here. It is well known that in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl denies the ego. Like Hume he does not find it as a phenomenological datum, as a descriptive constituent of an act. However, the second edition of the same work and the *Ideen I* accord recognition to the ego. An *Erlebnis* is analyzed into three factors, the ego, the *cogito*, and the *cogitatum*. But as the doctrine of constitution gradually comes to the forefront, both the cogitatum and the ego are shown to be constituted in consciousness, which amounts as little to the earlier Humean denial of the ego as it may be taken as implying a denial of the *cogitatum*. Again, to say that both the ego and the *cogitatum* are constituted is not to reduce the ego to an object. Husserl was well aware of the radical distinction between the two: the *cogitatum* is constituted by the intentional acts which are of an objectifying sort; the ego whose unity consists in habitualities has a genetic constitution. It is not a meaning-unity produced by act intentionalities, but a genetic unity of habitualities produced by inner time consciousness within itself, a sort of 'auto-genesis'.[8] The ego being thus constituted acquires a semblance with the object, though it never is quite one.

We may in that case distinguish between the transcendental ego and transcendental subjectivity. The former, like the *cogitatum*, is a constituted unity; the latter is the pre-mundane, constituting, meaning-giving consciousness. Of the ego, as of the object, we may say that it *is*; of the transcendental subjectivity we can only say that it 'functions' (*fungiert*).[9]

As Fink's famous article in the *Kant-Studien* emphasized, phenomenology is also concerned with the problem of the 'origin' of the world, but only in a very special sense of the word 'origin'. It does not speak of, or seek for, the origin in an ontic or mundane sense; it seeks to go back to the pre-mundane, pre-objective 'origin' of the mundane and the objective. The greatest danger of phenomenology, as Fink reminds us, is the danger of degrading a transcendental

truth into a mundane one.[10] The relation between the transcendental and the mundane remains the greatest problem for phenomenology, and indeed, lands us in what Fink has called the problem of the three egos: the transcendental, the empirical, and the phenomenological, the last one being that which effects the passage from the second to the first.

PHENOMENOLOGY AND INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Now there should be no doubt, even after such a cursory survey of phenomenology as has been given above, that there is much in it that would find resonance in Indian thought. Our confrontation of Indian thought with Husserlian phenomenology may well be carried through under three headings: (a) concerning methodology, (b) concerning the theory of the *eidos*, and (c) concerning the notion of transcendental subjectivity.

Methodology

With regard to philosophical method, it would seem that Indian philosophy, broadly speaking, has laid more emphasis on concrete intuition rather than on abstract thought. While such a generalization, like most generalizations in such matters, should be subjected to obvious limitations, several points may yet be advanced in favour of it.

For one thing, the Sanskrit word *darśana* (the synonym for 'philosophy') etymologically means 'seeing'. A philosophy represents a way of seeing the truth; it expresses a vision, a point of view. However, though too much cannot be made out of this etymology, yet it does bring to light the original conception which is not so much that of constructing a system as that of describing a vision of truth. Fortunately, this is not all that is there in Indian philosophy, for the *darśanas* spare no efforts to conceptualize the underlying intuitions and to support them with the help of logical arguments. However, the system-building and dialectical motives come to the forefront only in the later stages of development, whereas in the earlier stages dialectics are still subordinated to the original intuition.

Śaṁkara is a good example of a philosopher in whose writings appeal to intuition and dialectics are happily blended together. A few examples may be given here in corroboration. Not unlike Kant

in his Transcendental Dialectic, Śaṁkara draws attention to the ultimate futility of logical arguments unsupported by a founding intuition.[11] Every argument may be confronted with an equally strong, if not stronger, counter-argument, and there is no way out of this situation save by appealing to an intuition which arguments cannot make otherwise. Methodologically, this seems to be the kernel of truth in that appeal to *śruti* (scriptural authority) which, otherwise interpreted, may rightly be charged with dogmatism (from which Śaṁkara was not altogether free). Later in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*, Śaṁkara raises a question regarding the criterion of deciding whether a thing is possible or impossible, and observes that one does not first decide whether a thing is possible or impossible and then whether it can be known or not, but one concludes the possibility or impossibility of a thing from its actual or possible knowledge or otherwise.[12] It is from this point of view that the Advaita Vedānta thesis that the content of illusory experience has an 'inexplicable' status such that it cannot be subsumed under either of the concepts 'existent' and 'non-existent' may well lay claim to be a piece of genuine phenomenological description; whereas Rāmānuja's rejoinder that a thing, or better the content of an experience, must be either existent or non-existent, there being no third alternative, is but an attempt to squeeze experience into the strait-jacket of one's favoured conceptual framework even in the face of recalcitrant instances.

In fact, in the literature of all the various *darśanas* one meets with copious and constant appeal, in settling the relative tenability of conflicting arguments, to *lokavyavahāra*, common usage, and *lokānubhava*, ordinary experience. It is also a common methodological principle that where perception and argumentation come into conflict, it is the former whose claim would prevail; where either or both of these conflict with *śruti*, i.e. scriptural authority, the latter, embodying as it does a higher and more comprehensive intuition, will prevail.

An important fact connected with these methodological issues is that *formal* logic never developed to an extent to which it did in western thought. It is well known that the rules of inference in all the Indian systems of logic, require not only formal validity but also material truth; it would be wrong to suppose, however, that that distinction was drawn between formal validity and material truth, as though only separation was not approved of. The fact

seems to be that the notion of formal validity was not even clearly distinguished. The Indian philosopher, even the logician, was concerned not with propositions but with knowledges (*jñānāni*). Bare possibilities, not capable of being fulfilled in experience, did not interest him. Mathematics never bothered him. The distinction between analytic and synthetic truths, between necessary and contingents truths, between truths of reason and those of fact, never weighed on his mind. The issue between rationalism and empiricism cannot be stated in his language. He distinguished between perception and inference, but not between sense and reason. All these considerations, dogmatically stated here but capable of amplification only in a more exclusive concern with Indian logic,[13] bear out the claim that Indian philosophical thinking has been predominantly phenomenological and not speculative, concrete and not abstract.

Theory of the Eidos

In the early stages of the phenomenological movement, the distinction between individual facts and essences was in the forefront, and, as we have recounted, the phenomenologist took upon himself the task of describing only the essences and essential structures belonging to the region of being with which he may happen to be concerned. In the sense in which the phenomenologist does this, all philosophers *who did not have a reductionist program* and who were not constructing systems may be said to have been doing the same. Thus far the phenomenologist is not discovering a new method but raising to methodological self-consciousness a method practiced by all non-reductionist and non-speculative philosophers, including the Indians. It would be too much, however, to claim that an explicit methodological program of that sort was there. Nonetheless, we may still pause to consider two specific doctrines of the early Husserl, namely the doctrine of essence and the doctrine of eidetic intuition as distinct from but analogous to sensuous perception.

A clear distinction between particulars and universals, plus a refutation of nominalism (represented in Indian philosophy by the Buddhists) in a manner analogous to Husserl's in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, is to be found best amongst the philosophers of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of real universals should, however, be distinguished from the theory of

essences presented by Husserl in the *Ideen I*. The former is a most explicit realism; Husserl on the other hand always sought to avoid any hypostatization of universals.[14] Seeking to bypass all ontological commitments, Husserl was concerned with essences as the contents of eidetic intuition or of merely symbolic reference, or even as the ideal meaning-unity (*Bedeutungseinheit*) of expressions. Further, the Nayiyāyika's universals are explicitly so defined that a universal in that system cannot by definition belong to one and only one individual, whereas Husserl admits within his system the notion of an individual's own essence, as also the notion of an eidetic singularity.[15] The Indian theory is ontological and asserts that there *are* universals. The phenomenological theory of *eidos*, on the other hand, asserts that the contents of certain modes of consciousness are essences, in other words, that essences *are given*. The latter theory transforms into the former if we give to 'X is' the sense of 'X is given'. There are thus differences not only in the nature of the two theories but also in their explicit propositions. However, both are equally anti-nominalistic, and sometimes for similar reasons. Further, though the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika holds that we intuit the universals, yet the precise Husserlian notion of eidetic intuition is surely lacking. For Husserl it is a special mode of givenness to which one can attain when one goes through the processes like that of imaginative variation. For the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, intuition of the universals is a normal component of our ordinary perception of things and qualities as being such and such. As and when I perceive a patch of red as red, I also perceive the redness in it (a theory more akin to Russell's notion of a knowledge of universals by acquaintence). It is not for the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika an extraordinary perception to be achieved through a special intellectual effort (nor, in all fairness, is Husserl's *Wesensschau* as esoteric as it is made out to be), but a perception without which we could not *perceive* a thing *as* being such and such. However, Husserl's distinction between judgment about *eidos* and eidetic judgment[16] has its counterpart in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika distinction between perception of a universal (which, as said before, is an ordinary, or *laukika*, perception) and perception of *all* members coming under the class defined by a universal (which is called in the system an *alaukika*, or extra-ordinary perception, but only in a very special defined sense which is free from any esoteric or mystic suggestion).

Paul Ricœur had recently drawn attention to what he characterizes as the dialectics of intention and fulfilment in phenomenology.[17] From this point of view, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika with its emphasis on the absolute and adequate knowability of all that is, is free from dialectic. Early phenomenology was a search for absolute givenness, for certainty as opposed to contingency. Indian philosophy, generally speaking, does not know this distinction. For the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika in particular, all that is is knowable with certainty, and yet, given suitable epistemic conditions, all that is liable to become an object of doubt.[18] Thus there is a fundamental difference in spirit, which perhaps has a wider significance than what can be explored in this paper.

Transcendental Subjectivity

Husserl was led to his notion of transcendental consciousness out of various philosophical motives,[19] some of which are very clearly reflected in the Sāṁkhya and Vedānta systems, where alone we can look for parallels. If anywhere, it is here that we find the Cartesian search for indubitability.[20] The *Ātman* or transcendental consciousness is supposed to provide the absolute foundation for all knowledge, and indeed for all conscious behaviour.[21] Next, there is also in Husserl the idea of an absolute and adequate givenness, and we have seen how Husserl searched for it though he was forever dissatisfied with what he found. It is, however, one of the cardinal doctrines of the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta that consciousness alone is self-given (*svaprakāśa*), that it alone in fact is the very principle of givenness, whereas all transcendence is given in and through relatedness (real or apparent) to consciousness. Thus consciousness becomes in both the systems, but strictly speaking in the Advaita Vedānta alone (for the Sāṁkhya admits of a transcendence, an Other, the *Prakṛti* which is as primitive as consciousness), the phenomenologically primitive term. It *is* given apodictically and adequately. It is also *capable* of being absolutely given. Not quite so, however, in Husserl. Two components in Husserl's concept of consciousness prevent him from being satisfied with the conclusion to which he, again and again, felt attracted, that consciousness is capable of being adequately given. These are: the intentionality and the temporality of consciousness, both of which are absent in the Sāṁkhya-Vedānta philosophy

of consciousness. If consciousness is essentially intentional and also if it is essentially a flux, the givenness of consciousness could not be autonomous, and consciousness could never at any moment fully coincide with itself, we can only swim after it (*nachschwimmen*), as Husserl would say.

Yet, for both Husserl and Advaita Vedānta, all transcendence has a merely intentional being,[22] though the precise significance of this differs in the two systems. Since consciousness is essentially intentional in phenomenology, the intentional being of transcendence does not militate against the latter's reality. Since, however, in the Advaita Vedānta consciousness is essentially non-intentional, both the intentionality of consciousness and its correlative, viz. the intentional being of transcendence, are construed as being apparent, and not real.[23] Consequently, whereas it was possible for Husserl to pass on from the proposition that all transcendence has a merely intentional being to the further proposition that all transcendence is constituted in consciousness, such a passage is not possible in the Advaita Vedānta, where transcendence and the intentionality of consciousness remain inexplicable *facts*, their metaphysical status rationally undertermined (*anirvacanīya*), their content not deducible from the content or form of consciousness.

Phenomenology, both of Husserl and of his French followers like Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, has been deeply concerned with the nature and structure of consciousness, and if anywhere it is here that confrontation with Indian thought may prove invaluable. Any satisfactory philosophy of consciousness has to take care of three of its features, namely its reflexivity, its intentionality, and its unity. Consciousness is conscious of itself, in a way turned back upon itself; it is of an object in a very peculiar, almost not further analyzable sense of 'of'; every consciousness is somebody's, i.e. belongs along with some others to an over-arching (or to an underlying) unity. Though these are phenomena to start with, reflection has the task of explicating and interrelating them. The last of these, i.e. the phenomenon of the unity of consciousness, may be taken up under the problem of the ego.

For Husserl, consciousness is of course intentional, but it is also reflexive in the sense that it *may* double back upon itself, may become the object of another intentional act. Thus we find in him the tendency to reduce reflexivity of consciousness to its intentionality

which in that case becomes more basic in his system. This is also the case in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system, wherein consciousness is essentially of an object but not of itself, though an act of consciousness may become the intentional object of an act of a higher order. There is a difference, however, between Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Husserl in this respect: the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika exhibits a tendency to carry its analogy between consciousness and other objects too far—both are, or can be, intentional objects in the same sense—while Husserl shows an awareness of the limitations of such an analogy so that he is often found interestingly close to recognizing a pre-reflective, non-intentional reflexivity of consciousness.

Taking up this last mentioned tendency in Husserl's writing, Sartre develops the notion of a pre-reflective awareness which is still transparent but not an 'I think'. Consciousness in Sartre's system is both intentional and transparent: no attempt is made to reduce either of these to the other. Both taken together lead Sartre to the conclusion that consciousness is *nothing*; being intentional, it is wholly directed towards what it is not; being transparent, it cannot have any content that is opaque. Among Indian philosophers, Rāmānuja most surely recognize both: he in fact defines the reflexivity of consciousness partially in terms of its intentionality. It is transparent to its own locus, i.e. to the person whose consciousness it is, *only in so far as it* is also of an object.[24] And for Rāmānuja there is no consciousness which is not of an object, no *nirviṣayā anubhūti*.

While Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika explicitly does—and Husserl tends to—reduce the reflexivity of consciousness to its intentionality, and while Sartre and Rāmānuja regard both as being equally primitive features of consciousness, Śaṁkara looks upon reflexivity as the essence of consciousness and intentionality as an unaccountable and irrational moment which accrues to empirical consciousness *ab extra*.

Are reflexivity and intentionality mutually incompatible notions? For most Indian philosophies, especially for Sāṁkhya, Advaita Vedānta, and Yoga, the answer is 'yes'. Consciousness can only then be in full possession of itself, and so can only then be fully translucent, when it frees itself from its intentional function (which accrues to it, for these systems, *ab extra* and does not flow from the intrinsic structure of consciousness). Hence the Sāṁkhya prescription of dissociation from *Prakṛti*, the Yoga idea of arresting the mental modifications (*cittavṛttinirodha*) and the Vedānta notion

of freedom from the objective. However, for phenomenology generally speaking, this is not so. Neither for Husserl nor for Sartre is there any such relation of inverse variation between the two functions of consciousness. Paul Ricœur in fact has emphasized that some intentional acts (like acts of decision wherein one takes upon oneself a responsibility) instead of being fully exhausted in their intentional reference may be especially self-conscious. The more self-conscious these acts are the more pointed is their intentional reference.[25] It is only Merleau-Ponty who realizes that if consciousness is to be, as it surely is for him, intentional, it cannot be fully transparent, it cannot fully coincide with itself, so that there must be about it an incurable element of opacity,[26] which partly explains why Merleau-Ponty rejects the Sartrean dualism between consciousness that is fully transparent and the in-itself that is fully opaque. For Merleau-Ponty, it is the human body which mediates between these two extremes; it is for-itself and in-itself in one. The dualism breaks down. Thus realizing that full transparency and full intentionality (i.e., act-intentionality) are in a sense incompatible, Merleau-Ponty rejects both and replaces them by the notions of ambiguity and 'operative intentionality'. Advaita Vedānta faces the same problem, the same incompatibility between complete transparence and fullintentionality, but the solution it offers is different from that offered by Merleau-Ponty: for Advaita Vedānta, only transparence is real, intentionality is apparent.

We may next have a look at the *notion of ego* as the unity of conscious life. It is well known how Husserl, starting from a non-egological concept of consciousness in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, moved towards an egological one; as we have also pointed out, the ego nevertheless remains in his mature thinking a constituted entity as contrasted with transcendental subjectivity, which is the constituting basis. Sartre's response to Husserl in this connection is well known: rejecting the egological conception of the *Ideen* I, he stages a return to the non-egological one. The ego still remains, but only as a construct, a product of reflection (whereas Husserl appeared to have found room for it even in the unreflective act). Now that the ego in the sense of the 'I' is in some sense a construct, a derivative or subsidiary phenomenon (whatever may be the explanation of its origin) is common to the systems of Advaita Vedānta and Buddhism. Both look upon the 'I' as derived; in both systems the primitive

notion is that of consciousness of subjectivity regarded as reflexive but non-intentional. Advaita Vedānta, like Husserl, traces back the ego to the transcendental consciousness which is not itself an ego. Buddhism, not unlike Husserl and Sartre, construes this transcendental consciousness as a flux, though the precise sense of temporality involved is different: The unity of the ego is a derivative construct whose genesis is traced back to *saṁskāras*, traces of past members of the series of what Husserl calls habitualities: its genesis is from within the series owing to factors that are immanent to the series. What we have then may be said to be a sort of autogenesis. The transcendental consciousness in Advaita Vedānta, on the other hand, is non-temporal , contentless (surprisingly approximating Sartre's for-itself which is nothingness and excludes all opacity and matter from itself) and over-individual; in Husserl it is temporal flux, full of content, still individualized though not locatable in spatio-temporal dimensions, being itself the constituting ground of all that is so located. The phenomenological problem of 'origin', which, as we have emphasized above, is not to be understood in the mundane sense of creation, has its counterpart in Advaita Vedānta where the idea of creation also is relegated to religion, the philosophical, or in Husserl's langauge pre-mundane, notion being that of *vivarta.* The world is not created by Brahman as the pot by the potter, it is an appearance of it: it also is not constituted in Husserl's sense. Further, Fink's problematic of three egos appears in Advaita Vedānta as well; it reappears as the relation between the empirical ego *or Jiva*, the transcendental ego or *Ātman*, and the immanent witness self *or sākṣin*!

EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY AND INDIAN THOUGHT

The transition from transcendental phenomenology to existential phenomenology may be understood in various ways. The conception of transcendental subjectivity gives place to that of the *Wetterfahrendesleben*, the life-experiencing-the-world, already in the later Husserl,[27] as the most primitive founding structure. The understanding of intentionality in terms of subject and object, consciousness and being or in terms of *noesis* and *noema*, is rejected in favour of that in terms of the *Dasein* and the world.[28] Thus in Heidegger, the epistemological relation between subject and object or between

consciousness and being—both still Cartesian in spirit—is replaced by the ontological structure of *Dasein as Inderweltsein*, being in the world, or better, being-towards-the-world, another title for which is *Sorge* or 'care'. The carrier of intentionality is no more consciousness; consciousness is no doubt *of*..., but the intentionality of consciousness is rooted in the *Inderweltsein* of *Dasein* as a transcendence towards Being.

In Sartre this is transformed into the conception of consciousness as being nothingness: consciousness is wholly directed towards what it is not, it is nothing in itself, it excludes all contents from within itself. The dualism between consciousness and being which Heidegger sought to overcome reappears, in a rather curious way, in Sartre. It is now the dualism between being-for-itself and being-in-itself. The absurdity of human existence is that it is, and yet cannot be, both. The transparency of the for-itself is apparently lost in bad faith, and is recovered in the authenticity of personal commitment. Man is free and has only to be fully aware of it.

Merleau-Ponty, not unlike Heidegger, rejects the Sartrean dualism: the two extremes of pure transparence and pure opacity are rejected in favour of the phenomenon of ambiguity, illustrated at its best in human existence which is both in-itself. This being both if one does not make human existence *absurd* (as it would be the case if one started with the initial dualism) but reveals it as essentially *ambiguous*. A philosophy of ambiguity replaces a philosophy of absurdity; the traditional contrasts between the physical and the mental, the objective and the subjective, determinism and freedom, mechanism and teleology merge into each other, bringing to light a foundational area which is both or neither.

It may be said, even at this preliminary stage of our exposition of existential phenomenology, that much of Indian philosophy exhibits a similar interest and a similar attitude: the attitude of philosophizing from the point of view of the human situation, and not from an angel's point of view. Whatever may be the truth about the current conception that all Indian philosophy is *mokṣa*-oriented, the undeniable fact remains that much of the Sāṁkhya, Vedānta, Buddhist, and Yoga systems is not just neutral system-building but is an attempt to think the human situation through. While some of the epistemological and logical theories of these systems may be detached from this overall interest, the central metaphysical thesis

springs from the practical interest of leading man out of *duḥkha* into a state of bliss, from inauthentic to authentic existence, from absorption in the object to self-realization. The concepts of *duḥkha* and *Sorge*, as also those of *samsāra* and *Geworfenheit*, are closely allied. Neither member of the first pair denotes a simple feeling (of pain or of anxiety); it rather designates an ontological situation of passivity, of being subject to causality, of helplessness, etc. Neither of the second pair likewise stands for the *ontic* idea of world or being in it; it rather stands for something more fundamental that is constitutive of the human predicament.

The overall delineation of the human predicament shows a remarkable affinity. The Sartrean dualism between the for-itself and the in-itself has a similar counterpart in the Sāṁkhya: the exact status of the human person, however, remains vague. Man is neither the pure *puruṣa* nor an evolute of Prakṛti; he is a curious mixture of both, the association between the two is said to be owing to ignorance. This dualism inherent in the nature of the human person is more clearly recognized in the Advaita Vedānta . In man, the *Ātman* and the *Anātman* are united (*Satyānṛte mithunīkṛtya*); he is neither pure consciousness, nor is he just the psycho-physical organism. The two are knotted together, held together in a *granthi*, a knot, as it were. This is not, surely, in this system, a real unity. This predicament is not inescapable; the tie can be dissolved, the knot untied. But then the human person would no more have his individual though authentic existence; *qua* finite person, he would cease to be; the real and the unreal would stand separated.

The basic differences between existentialism and Indian thought should by now be clear. Indian thought is in an important sense deterministic. The human situation is held to be under the sway of the ubiquitous law of *karma*, which rules out that absolute freedom which Sartre ascribes to man; whereas in much of existentialism it is this absolute freedom which confers on human existence its basic care, the source of *duhkha* in much of Indian thought is the determination by *karma*. However, the notion of *karma* implies neither absolute determinism nor absolute freedom: not absolute determinism, for the individual is offered the opportunity to give shape, by virtue of his own acts, to his own future; not absolute freedom, for there is always a determinate situation, historically created, from within which the individual acts. To such a position Sartre comes closer

in his later works, and Merleau-Ponty of course stands nearer through his emphasis on both historical determinism and freedom. This is not in any case to deny the deep differences that exist: the determination implied in the notion of *karma* is by the individual's own past, not by those historical forces to which the individual's acts contribute but which are in the end over-individual. Indian thought had, side by side with determinism of *karma*, the notion of the freedom of *mokṣa*: the latter is not to be confused with either the Sartrean absolute freedom of choice or the freedom of authentic existence in the awareness of death as an existential possibility for *Dasein*. *Mokṣa* in Śaṁkara's system, like freedom in Sartre's, is not a state to be attained, but a reality to be recognized.[29] One *is* free but has only to know that one is free. However, *mokṣa* transcends causality and is not simply a hole within it.

Many strands in the ontology of Martin Heidegger show clearly Vedānta traits, which is not to say that Heidegger received any influence from Oriental thought. (In fact, Heidegger's greatness lies partly in this that he attempted a 'destruction of western metaphysics' from within that tradition.) This is especially so with regard to his conceptions of *Sein* (Being) and *Wahrheit* (Truth). Consider, for example, such a statement as this: '...jedesmal erscheint da Seiende als Seiende im Lichte des Seins.'[30] Or, consider the question Heidegger asks: 'Woher kommt es, dass überall Seiendes den Vorrang hat und jegliches, das so verstandene Nichts als das Sein selbst, vergessen bleibt?'[31] Also the statement: 'Das Sein jedochist keine seiende Beschaffenheit an Seiendem. Das Sein lässt sich nicht gleich dem Seienden gegenständlich vor- und herstellen.'[32] The *Brahman*, in Advaita Vedānta, is characterized as Being; as distinguished from all beings, it is yet not the same as the universal concept of existence. It is not one object amongst others; it is that in the light of which everything else is manifested and which is itself self-manifesting. Furthermore, the human condition, according to the Advaita Vedānta, is rooted in an ignorance of the Ground of all beings. Compare Heidegger again: 'Die Irre gehört zur inneren Verfassung des Da-Seins in das der geschichtliche Mensch eingelassen ist.'[33] One has to read this along with Śaṁkara's well known *Adhyāsa Bhāṣya*.[34] For both, again, man of all beings stands in a privileged relation to Being. Man, says Heidegger, is the 'Neighbor of Being'. *Sein und Zeit* attempts to discover Being in and through a reflection

on the nature of *Dasein*. For Vedānta also, an analysis and reflection on the nature of the self is a means of knowing *Brahman*.

These striking similarities notwithstanding, the two philosophies diverge radically. For Heidegger, even *Sein*, and not merely *Seiende*, is temporal, historical, and in that sense finite: '"Sein" ist in Sein und Zeit nicht anderes als "Zeit"...'[35] Again. 'das Sein selbst im Wesen endlich ist.'[36] Heidegger frequently speaks of the destiny of Being, but all such expressions become simply meaningless within the system of Advaita Vedānta. For Heidegger, as Richardson remarks, Being is 'the process by which finite beings emerge from concealment—this and nothing more'.[37] For Advaita Vedānta, the process of emergence from concealment is not a process *of* Being; it is a process of destruction of that which apparently conceals—but never quite conceals—the Being which itself is self-manifesting, while it manifests all others including that concealment itself. One may detect the same points of difference between the Advaita Vedānta conception of truth as *svataḥ* or intrinsic to knowledge, and not merely an external property of judgments, or as the self-revelation of Being, or as the unconcealment of what was hitherto concealed,[38] and Heidegger's conception of truth as *Unverborgenheit*.

It would seem, then, that though there is considerable similarity in outlook regarding the human predicament between Indian thought and existentialism, there are overriding points of difference as well, which may be said to be chiefly in the concept of *karma* as entailing a sort of universal determinism, subject to the limitations mentioned before, with regard to human affairs; in a lack of appreciation of the essential historicity and temporality of human existence, of consciousness as well as of Being; and finally in the idea of possible escape from the apparent finiteness of the human situation. It may be noted that the conception of time as cyclic which pervades Indian thought is far from making room for precisely that sort of temporality which phenomenology and existentialism have emphasized.

ENCOUNTER WITH MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT

One finds oneself in a most difficult situation when one tries to assess the influence of phenomenology and existentialism on modern Indian philosophy or the response of modern Indian thinkers to

those trends in western philosophy. One may be expected to show historical routes of influence, textual references, and such evidence. It is not my purpose to undertake such a project. Some of the thinkers mentioned here may have received no direct influence from phenomenology, but my references to them are justified on the ground that their thoughts exhibit phenomenological elements. In fact we shall search for the phenomenological and existential elements in modern Indian thinking, and we are to figure out exactly how these elements fit in the classical or traditional elements.

In view of Indian thought's overriding concern with the problem of consciousness or subjectivity, it is but natural to expect that if anywhere, it is in modern thinking on this and allied problems that we may look for phenomenological and existentialist elements. And our expectation, happily enough, stands fulfilled. Amongst the older generation of modern Indian philosophers, Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950) is likely to prove most interesting in this connection. His writings, largely metaphysical and also mystical, owe their relevance, from our present point of view, to three considerations. For one thing, he gives us an elaborate descriptive phenomenology of inner experience: for another, he develops an interesting theory of grades of consciousness—a theory whose metaphysical orientation hides the descriptive and phenomenological basis; lastly, his thought is genuinely concerned with the spiritual destiny of the individual. Regarding the last point, Sri Aurobindo rejects the traditional Vedāntic notion of salvation according to which the finite individual is lost and merged in the Absolute, and conceives of finite individuality as being unique and irreducible. Rejecting the older doctrines of the illusoriness of bodily existence, Sri Aurobindo seeks to bring out its spiritual significance. With a great deal of reservation, this may be called an existentialistic strain, but the cosmic and the transcendent weighed too heavily on his thought to permit its characterization as existentialistic.[39]

It is, however, in the writings of K.C. Bhattacharyya (1875–1949) that we come to meet with the most interesting attempt to build a phenomenological philosophy independently of any direct influence from Husserl. (There is in fact no reference to Husserl in K.C. Bhattacharyya's published writings.) In his essay on *The Concept* of Philosophy now included in the second volume of his collected papers, he rejects the notion of philosophy as the construction of a world-view by putting together the results of the sciences, and

defines philosophy as 'the self-evident elaboration of the self-evident'. But this again needs to be done at various levels of theoretic consciousness. Four such levels are distinguished: empirical thought involving reference to the perceptual object, pure objective thought which refers to an object but not to a perceptual object, spiritual thought whose content is wholly subjective, and transcendental thought whose content is neither subjective not objective. Of these four, philosophy is concerned with the last three. A philosophy concerned with the second, i.e. pure objective thought, is what corresponds to the objective phenomenology of essences, so characteristic of the early phenomenologists. A philosophy concerned with the third, i.e. spiritual thought, is what corresponds to the existential and transcendental phenomenologies. There is nothing in western phenomenology which could be said to correspond to K.C. Bhattacharyya's philosophy of the fourth level: here one goes beyond phenomenology in the strict sense. Perhaps the nearest approximation would be Karl Jasper's notion of the Encompassing which can only be symbolically communicated.

A separate sketch of a phenomenology of subjectivity is worked out in *The Subject as Freedom* of the year 1929.[40] The subject is first 'what intends itself by the word "I"'.[41] Further, the subject is 'felt to be free or dissociated from the object'.[42] Working with these two notions of subjectivity, Bhattacharyya distinguishes between several grades of subjectivity, which are also various stages of realizing freedom from the object. Broadly speaking, he recognizes three stages of subjectivity, the bodily, the psychical and the spiritual. Bhattacharyya's treatment of bodily subjectivity, as also the fundamental role which he assigns to it, places him in the company of modern existentialist phenomenologists like Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Like Merleau-Ponty, he holds that no merely objectivistic account can do justice to the unique singularity of one's own body even as a perceived object.[43] The body is 'the subject in relation to the environment'.[44] 'The objectivity of other perceived objects is constituted by their position relative to the percipient's body which itself therefore cannot be taken to be so constituted.'[45] Thus, even for all higher levels of subjectivity, the bodily self 'which alone is actually evident to us'[46] remains foundational, at least in the sense that 'the first given feeling of freedom in body-feeling is what all freedom of higher grade involves and derives its meaning from.'[47]

The higher grades of subjectivity which claim to be absolutely unobjective remain for us only possibilities to be realized and 'only imagined to be dissociable' from the body-feeling.

Again, not unlike Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, Bhattacharyya distinguishes between perceived body and felt body, and between objective space and felt (in Merleau-Ponty's language 'pre-objective') space. There are some obvious differences between the two philosophers here, and possibly not all of them are of importance. For example, the fact that the pre-objective is, according to the French philosopher, genuinely perceived, while it is, for the Indian philosopher, felt and not perceived, is perhaps only a difference concerning language.

The basic difference between K.C. Bhattacharyya and the existential phenomenologists, however, is this: for phenomenology in general, consciousness is intentional; being directed towards an other is constitutive of subjectivity; whereas for K.C. Bhattacharyya it is just the reverse; consciousness is, so far as actuality is concerned, intentional, but it also shows, at every stage, even at the stage of bodily subjectivity, a felt freedom from the object, so that a completely non-intentional consciousness is to be recognized as a possibility to be achieved, Bhattacharyya's notion of subjectivity as consisting in freedom from the objective therefore is radically different from Sartre's notion of consciousness as negation of the object: the latter derives from pushing the notion of intentionality to its extreme logical consequence, the former from recognizing non-intentional consciousness as a possibility inherent in *actual* intentional consciousness as *a demand.* (One has only to bear in mind that K.C. Bhattacharyya still remained affiliated to the school of Śaṁkara!) Once non-intentional consciousness is recognized as a demand implicit in actual intentional consciousness, we may appreciate Bhattacharyya's rather puzzling characterization of intentionality, such as, for example, is implied in this statement: 'The knowing function represents a positive mode of this freedom, the freedom of the subject to relate to the object *without getting related to it.*'[48]

Kalidas Bhattacharyya (1911–84) develops the ideas of his father in a distinctively novel direction, and shows, especially in his latest work, interesting affiliations to the phenomenological school. He takes part of the business of philosophy to consist in a reflective elaboration of essences or idealities, but also is aware of the problem

of relating the essences, reflectively discovered, to reality. The essences, he holds,[49] *were* there but as undistinguished, in empirical reality. They were there fused with empirical reality, but not *as* essences or as idealities. It is thought and speech which constitute their autonomy.[50] But he recognizes—like the later Husserl, especially of the *Erfahrung und Urteil*—that the essences which are reflectively constituted were presented in 'the world of acceptance' (compare Husserl's *Lebenswell*) 'as generic images or schemata'.[51] To be compared here is Husserl's notion of vague typicality.[52] The reflectively constituted essences, however, are not as such real; they claim or demand reality. This demand leads Kalidas Bhattacharyya to ascribe to them the valuational character of ought-to-be.[53]

Further, the idealities are characterized by a special nearness to or 'hanging on to' consciousness, a characterization which reminds us of Nicolai Hartmann's well-known doctrine that the idealities have a special *Nähe zum Bewusstsein*. This last point leads Bhattacharyya to show where and how the demand of the idealities to reality may be fulfilled: it is in pure consciousness, first conceived as individual and personal and then as over-individual and depersonalized (corresponding to K.C. Bhattacharyya's third and fourth grades of thinking). Thus, 'when the phenomenological voyage is complete we also discover ways to realizing the demand'.[54]

Influences of Nicolai Hartmann and Husserl should by now be evident. There is the clear Husserlian transition from the empirically real to the ideal essences (through 'reflective distinguishment' rather than through 'phenomenological reduction'), and from ideal essences to pure consciousness which both constitutes them and fulfils the demand for reality inherent in them. There is, in Kalidas Bhattacharyya's works, an awareness of the foundational character of the 'world of acceptance', as also of the 'unobjective attitude', and idealism comes only 'in the sequel'.[55] Not unlike his father, he recognizes the primacy of bodily subjectivity,[56] but also sees that even in bodily subjectivity there is a claim to transcend the body. There is an interesting phenomenology of the dialectics of these two aspects, body and transcendence, in the notions of 'I', 'You', and 'He', the separation of these two aspects being utmost in the 'I' and least in 'He'.[57]

Amongst other works of phenomenological and existential interest are P.J. Chaudhuri's (1916–1961) distinction between levels of con-

sciousness, J.N. Mohanty's (1928–) distinction between modes of givenness, and N.V. Banerjee's (1898–1984) concepts of person and freedom. Chaudhuri, whose untimely death was a great loss to modern Indian philosophy, bases his distinction between levels of consciousness on the fact that at each level we are able to reflect upon and criticize the earlier one. Thus the possibility of criticizing the validity of perceptual experience implies a higher level of awareness, namely that for which the scientific laws and relations are valid. However, this again can be criticized, and the absolute validity of these laws challenged, implying a still higher level of consciousness. At the same time, each higher level is in a way implicit in the preceding one. This scheme is worked out in a short paper 'Knowledge and Truth: A Phenomenological Inquiry'.[58]

Another paper, 'Vedānta as Transcendental Phenomenology',[59] more explicitly lays down phenomenology as the method of philosophy, but this time we are given a somewhat different order of levels, starting with the experience of dream or illusion for which the illusory content is real. This is cancelled in waking experience, which then is a higher level. However, Chaudhuri proceeds to make the furtehr claim that the illusory content is a posit of the waking consciousness, but this thesis may appear to be more speculative than phenomenological. Mohanty's early papers, especially 'Modes of Giveness',[60] insist on a distinction between theoretic and practical modes of givenness, and within each he distinguishes between several sub-modes. For example, within the practical mode, he distinguishes between the technically practical which characterizes our awareness of physical objects and tools and the morally practical which characterizes our awareness of persons. In the theoretical mode we apprehend sense data, essences, and other idealities, or in a subjectivity oriented attitude, the subject as distinguished from the person. Between these various modes as also between the objects which are thereby given, Mohanty sees a discontinuity which reflection cannot and need not overcome. Thus the gulf between reflection and unreflective experience comes to the forefront. This Principle of Discontinuity—and another called the Principle of Complementarity, according to which phenomena allow, in fact demand, alternative modes of explanation—are applied to the task of interpreting Husserl's theory of meaning.[61]

Banerjee's work is nearer to existentialism, especially to that

variety of it which we find in Buber. Philosophy for him is essentially anthropocentric in character, and he would even agree that it is means to achieving freedom, only a very peculiar sense of his own. The concept of person is made the central notion; those of meaning and time are shown to be essentially personal. The person is not the separatist individual, but he is essentially with-others. The 'We' is the primary notion; the separate individual is in a state of bondage. Liberation releases a person from the world of spatialized facts, and lets him live in the awareness of pure time.

CONCLUSION

This rather cursory survery of modern Indian thought should show that there is a distinct, and in some respects noteworthy, attempt to do philosophy along phenomenological and existentialistic lines. The broad features that emerge are: a preoccupation with the problem of consciousness and subjectivity (which is what relates directly to the traditional philosophies), theories of grades of consciousness combined with the recognition of the importance of bodily subjectivity, an interest in the concepts of person and other selves, and a new attempt to understand the notions of freedom and *mokṣa*. The distinction between practical (Mohanty's 'practical mode of givenness', Kalidas Bhattacharyya's 'world of acceptance') and theoretical carries with it an awareness of the limitations as well as the proper function of reflection in its relationship to unreflective experience. There is less eagerness to characterize the 'practical' as 'false', or to take the opposite path—often traced to Hegel—of *deducing* the empirically real from the reflective concepts. It would seem, the *discontinuity* between reflection and unreflective experience is being felt more and more; even Kalidas Bhattacharyya with his notion of *objective implicitness* recognizes this discontinuity, i.e. the novelty of what reflective thought constitutes.

The tasks which from our present point of view still remain to be fulfilled are: a more elaborate working out of the ideas which still are presented in rather rudimentary form; relating these thoughts, with greater accuracy and boldness, to the texts of the traditional philosophies; exploration of phenomenological elements in the traditional source books and separation of them from the speculative-dialectical elements, on the one hand, and the dogmatic-

theological elements, on the other; and finally, a more self-conscious orientation towards the western thought movements.

NOTES

1. Cf. M. Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1951); and J. Hyppolite, *Genèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit de Hegel*, 2 vols. (Paris: Aubier, 1946).
2. Cf. J.N. Mohanty, 'Phenomenology in Indian Philosophy', *Proceedings of the XI International Congress of Philosophy* (Brussels, 1953) XIII, 255–262; P.J. Chaudhuri, *Reflections on Science, Philosophy and Art* (Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, 1966).
3. E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einen Phänomenologie und phänomenologische Philosophie*: Erstes Buch (Husserlian Bd. III, The Hague: Martinus Nijoff, 1950), §§ 1–8.
4. E. Husserl, op. cit., § 3.
5. E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, II.1 (4. Auflage, Halle, 1928), p. 369.
6. E. Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie*, 1930–1939 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).
7. G. Berger, *Le Cogito dans la philosophie de Husserl* (Paris, 1941), p. 123.
8. G. Funke, *Zur transzendentalen Phänomenologie* (Bonn: H. Bouvier Verlag, 1957), pp. 12–5.
9. Ibid., pp. 22–5.
10. E. Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie*, p. 13.
11. 'This is indeed a beauty of reasoning that it does not have any absolute finality.... Antinomies arising out of the fact that conclusions arrived at by reasoning oppose each other are well known. Whatever is estabished by one reasoner as being valid is contradicted by another; what is established by this latter person is contradicted by still another: this indeed is well known in the world. How can any knowledge arising out of such reasoning which has no absolute finality be valid knowledge?... It is not further possible to get together all reasoners, past, present and yet to come, in one place and at one time so that their thoughts may be of the same form or may have the same object and so could be (regarded as) true knowledge.' Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, 2.1.11.
12. 'Possibility and impossiblity are ascertained after the application or non-application of (the various) sources of valid knowledge, but it is not the case that the application or non-application of (the various)

sources of valid knowledge is determined after the possibility or impossibility is ascertained. If something is apprehended by any one of the sources of valid knowledge, beginning with perception, then that indeed is possible. Whatever is not apprehended by any of the sources of valid knowledge is not possible'. Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, 2.2.28.

13. For a preliminary account, see J.N. Mohanty, 'Nyāya Theory of Doubt', *Visva Bharati Journal of Philosophy*, III, 1, 15–35; reprinted in Mohanty, *Phenomenology and Ontology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970).
14. E. Husserl, *Ideen, Erstes Buch*, § 22.
15. Ibid., § 14.
16. Ibid., § 5.
17. P. Ricœur, *Husserl, An Analysis of his Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967); especially Chapter 7: 'Kant and Husserl'.
18. J.N. Mohanty, 'Nyāya Theory of Doubt'.
19. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 195f.
20. 'Since sometimes error is possible with regard to outer objects, there may arise doubt, whether it is the same object as that or whether it is merely similar to that. But there never arises doubt with regard to the subject of experience, namely whether I am the same as he or am merely like him'. Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 2.2.25. Also: 'Every one is aware of his own existence; no one knows "I am not." If the existence of the self were not well-known, then every one could have experienced "I do not exist."' Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.1.
21. 'Self is the locus, the support, of all activity including valid knowledge, and so is established prior to them. It is not possible to deny such a thing. Only a contingent thing can be denied, but not the self itself. It is the essence of him who denies; the warmth of fire cannot be removed by fire itself'. Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 2.3.37.
22. 'Everything is an object of the witness consciousness, either as known or as unknown'. Mādhavācārya, *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṁgraha*. Compare Husserl, *Ideen, Erstes Buch*, § 44.
23. See the passsage quoted from Śaṁkara in note 34 below.
24. 'Concerning the self-revealing character of knowledge to which reference has been made (by the follower of Śaṁkara), that is so only for the knower self and (only) when (its) object is being manifested; but there is no rule that it is so for all and at all times'. 'Consciousness is the property of manifesting its own object by its mere presence'. Rāmānuja is his *Śrī Bhāṣya* on *Brahmansūtra* 1.1.1.

25. P.M Ricœur, *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary,* trans. E.V. Kohak (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1966), p. 61.
26. M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. C. Smith (New York, 1962), pp. 215 fn., 296–8, 333.
27. Cf. J.M. Edie, 'Transcendental Phenomenology and Existentialism', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 25 (1964–65), 52–63; Brand, G., *Well, Ich urul Zeil, nuch unveroffentllichlen Manuskripten E. Husserls (The Hague Martinus Nijhoff, 1955).*
28. *M. Heidegger, Sein and Zeil* (7, Auflage, Tubingen; Max Nierneyer Veriag, 1953), 12–13.
29. 'If that (i.e. freedom) were taught as an object of injunction, if freedom were to be achieved through acting upon that injunction, then it would be non-eternal. One who takes freedom to be something that can be originated, for him it shall depend upon activity whether mental, verbal or bodily. The same would be the case if freedom were the result of some transformation. On both these views freedom would surely become non-eternal'. Śaṁkara in his Commentary on *Brahmansūtra* 1.1.4.
30. M. Heidegger, *Was ist Metaphysik?* (6, Auflage, Frankfurt: Vittorio KlosterMann, 1951), p. 7.
31. Ibid., p. 21.
32. Ibid., p. 41.
33. M. Heidegger, *Von Wesen der Wahrheit* (2, Auflage, Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1949), p. 22.
34 'Of the referents of the concepts of "Thou" and "I", the object and the subject, with their natures opposed to each other like darkness and light, when it is established that one cannot intelligibly be of the nature of the other, the more unintelligible it is for their attributes also to be identified with one another: therefore, the superimposition of the object is the referent of the concept "Thou" and of its attributes, on the subject which is the intelligent self and is the referent of the concept of "I", and conversely through and error with respect to that, the superimposition of the subject and its attributes on the object, can properly be only an illusion.' Śaṁkara in *Adhyāsabhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtras*.
35. M. Heidegger, *Was ist Metaphysik?*, p. 16.
36. Ibid., p. 36.
37. W.J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), p. 640.
38. Thus Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Advaitaratnarakṣaṇam* defines truth as 'the determination of an object hitherto unknown' (*ajñātārthaniścayātmakameva*). *Advaitasiddhi* edition, p. 32. Also compare Mādhavācārya in *Vivaraṇaprameyassamgraha*: 'The true knowledge under consideration is something which has before it some other thing

which is other than the mere antecedent non-existence of that knowledge, which conceals its object, and which is destroyed by the knowledge which further belongs to the same as the knowledge; for the knowledge manifests what was unmanifested: Like the first ray of lamp lighted in darkness.'

39. Compare J.N. Mohanty, 'Integralism and Modern Philosophical Anthropology', in Frederic Spiegelberg and Haridas Chaudhuri (eds.), *The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960).
40. K.C. Bhattacharyya, *The Subject as Freedom* (Bombay: The Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1930); also included in Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Philosophy* (Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, 1957), Vol. II.
41. Ibid., p. 193.
42. Ibid., p. 11.
43. Ibid., p. 93.
44. Ibid., p. 92.
45. Ibid., p. 93.
46. Ibid., p. 196.
47. Ibid., p. 104.
48. Ibid., p. 23 (italics mine).
49. Kalidas Bhattacharyya, *Philosophy, Logic and Lãnguage* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1965), pp. 25–7.
50. Ibid., p. 41.
51. Ibid., p. 55.
52. Cf. J.N. Mohanty, *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), pp. 141–5.
53. *Philosophy, Logic and Language*, p. 32.
54. Ibid., p. 47.
55. Ibid., p. 53.
56. Ibid., p. 133–4.
57. Ibid., p. 135–6.
58. P.J. Chaudhuri, *Reflections on Science, Philosophy, and Art* (Calcutta: Progressive Publishers, 1966), pp. 74–80.
59. *Reflections on Science, Philosophy, and Art* pp. 81–95.
60. J.N. Mohanty, 'Modes of Givenness', *Archiv für Philosophie* (Stuttgart, 1959); included in J.N. Mohanty, *Phenomenology and Ontology*.
61. Cf. J.N. Mohanty, *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*.

25
Philosophy of History and its Presuppositions

The view has been very often expressed that traditional Indian *thought* did not recognize the importance of history. This is a large statement and cannot be examined here. For the present, we are concerned with Indian *philosophy*, and we need not disagree that a philosophy of history in the true sense is missing within this domain. Now what are the implications of—and if one wishes, the reasons for—this lack? Several remarks may be in order.

It is interesting to begin by noticing that none of the classical schools of Indian philosophy—who in accordance with a methodological tradition started with a list of *pramāṇas* or source of true knowledge—recognized history as a *pramāṇa*. This is not to say that historical knowledge was not regarded as valid. Only, the philosophers did not recognize historical knowledge as a unique and irreducible species of valid knowledge. They in fact sought to explain it either as a sort of inference (*anumiti*) or as a species of verbal testimony (*śabdajñāna*). This fact by itself does not explain why a philosophy of history should not have developed. For, given an interest in historical phenomena or historical writings the philosophers could have developed—consistently with their reduction of historical knowledge to *anumiti* or to *śabdajñāna*—either a logic of historical inference or a semantics of historical language. This however did not take place. Not history alone but also mathematics suffered from negligence at the hands of philosophers—and this despite the fact that both history writings in the form of the *purāṇas* and of course mathematics with preeminence flourished.[1] One is naturally led to ask: 'Why?'

Comparison with Greek thought is instructive. The Greek philosophers not only discussed philosophical problems about

mathematics, but some of them regarded mathematical knowledge as the paradigm case knowledge. But what about history? Karl Löwith has argued that classical Greek thought—not much unlike Oriental thinking—is still further away from modern historical thinking. And of course the Greeks did write excellent histories. Not until the dawn of Christianity did a philosophy of history arise in the West. One may again ask: 'Why?'

We are in effect asking: why is it that ancient Indian philosophy as well as classical Greek thought failed to develop a philosophical concern for history? What difference did the dawn of Christianity make so as to make a philosophical awareness of the importance of history possible? Is that difference a necessary presupposition of this awareness? Or could it be that in this area we are dealing with historical accidents, and that the search for necessary antecedents and implications is a misdirected effort?

It is true that a most absorbing and developed concern with *time* is to be found in most Indian philosophies, possibly leaving aside the extreme illusionistic systems. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika regards time as an objective reality, one, infinite and partless, and Vatsayāna, the commentator on Gautama's *Sūtras*, seeks to keep the notion of time free from possible confusion with that of space. Time, for the Vaiśeṣikas, is the condition of all movement and change, the basis of all temporal relations. It is one, but only appears to be many owing to associations with the changes which occur within it. The Sāṁkhya regards time as a form of Prakṛti, a specific evolute of it—not a substance, as in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, but a relation connecting events together. The philosophers of this school debated the issue whether the one time, as distinguished from the moments, is a construction of the mind or an objective reality. For Rāmānuja, time and Prakṛti are equally original realities, though time is not a self-subsistent reality but belongs—as everything else does—to Brahman or the Absolute. The schools of Buddhism show a wide spectrum of views regarding time. Common to them is a conception of universal change as consisting of moments. It is only in the Advaita Vedānta that time becomes an unreal phenomenon representing the relation between Spirit and Māyā.[2]

Thus the Newtonian view that time is an infinite self-subsistent, all-pervading continuum, the Leibnizian view that time is a system of relations between what are essentially non-temporal monads, the

Kantian view that time is a mental construction, and the Bradleyan view that time is but an appearance of the absolute—all these seem to have been represented in the Indian schools. We may not therefore accuse the Indian philosophers of not taking time seriously, and we cannot explain their negligence of history as being due to their lack of concern with time.

Could it be said that though the importance of time was taken note of, yet for most Indian philosophers time did not *achieve* anything new? That time does not achieve anything new may be a consequence of two quite different doctrines to be found in Indian thought. In the first place, there is the view, to be found in most schools of Indian philosophy, Buddhism not excluded, that the goal of human existence, the supreme value, is *mokṣa* and that *mokṣa* is attainable through right knowledge. When a person struggling through time does acquire right knowledge of the nature of his self and thereby achieves *mokṣa*, he does not, in an important sense, achieve anything new, he does not acquire any previously non-existent excellence. He only recognizes a truth eternally accomplished. He realizes that this perfection was eternally within him, and that his efforts through time have not given him anything which he did not earlier possess.

There is still another trend of thought which, by implication, mellows down the importance of time. This is the well-known conception of time as cyclic. According to this conception the infinite time is not a linear series but an endless succession of recurrent cycles which fall into four main types: *satya, tretā, vāpara* and *kali*. Now it would seem that in this conception of time nothing is essentially new, for there must have been a preceding cycle in which it figured. In fact, on this view the very irreversibility and unidimensionality of time come to be denied. Could such a conception of time allow for the possibility of a serious concern with history?

There is no doubt that these two factors are in a way responsible for the Indian attitude towards time and its relevance. For us, the second one is more interesting. However, with regard to the conception of a cyclic time two things may be borne in mind. For one thing, not all philosophical systems made any substantial use of this notion in their ontologies. For another, the conception of a cyclic time does not deny newness of events. What it denies is the newness of the values achieved, or of the truths realized in an epoch.

It is not that every single event of individual belonging to one *yuga* had been prefigured in an infinite number of other *yugas* preceding it. No *yuga* in fact is identical with another in content. But the moral and spiritual ideals, the human virtues and failings, the patterns of social and individual behaviour—the form, in brief, is what is supposed to repeat itself. Such identity of form leaves room for novelty of content.

Truths, according to the Indian tradition, are ageless, supra-historical. So also are values. No man could claim to have discovered the truth for the first time. Great men like Srī Krishna and the Buddha claim only to be teaching truths which others without number had seen before them. Who in the long list of seers could lay claim to have been the first to see the truth?

History as the series of events or as the record of events in their uniqueness, is assured. History as a significant process of achieving new values which were not achieved before is denied. If philosophy is concerned primarily with ultimate values, with ageless and eternal truths, it need have no concern with the history of events.

The law of *karma*, so uniquely determining the broad spectrum of Indian philosophical thought, assures a moral order in the universe, but does not generate a consciousness of history. For history, in the strict sense, is not the history of the sojourn of an individual soul through the series of its transmigrations, but a gradual advance of an institution, a race, a nation, or of mankind in general towards a far off goal through an ordered succession of events and experiences, actions and decisions, thoughts and sufferings. The law of *karma* made room for both determination by the past and initiative at present, which an awareness of history requires. But it is *not the sort of* determination which the notion of history requires. It is individualistic in application, and its basic notions of rebirth and transmigration are trans-historical. A doctrine of the spiritual evolution of the soul through successive births is as little historical in nature as is a doctrine of cosmic change, even of ordered cosmic change. Both these doctrines were developed in Indian philosophy—with no consequential advantage in favour of a philosophical interest in history.

The Vedāntic monists debated the issue, whether finite individuality and the world of change are, from a transcendental (*pāramārthika*) standpoint, real or not. Śaṁkara did not as is well known, while

Rāmānuja did, accord reality to the world and finite selves. But it is important to bear in mind that merely by granting reality to the world and finite individuals one does not make room for history. One may even go further: a recognition of the reality of time, though a necessary condition of a philosophical concern with time, is not yet sufficient for it. In fact, Rāmānuja and many other schools of Vedānta did recognize time to be real, but they did not develop any genuine philosophical concern for history.

The reason is not far to seek. History is not just change. Recognition that the world is a process in which nothing abides is not an index of one's sense for history. There are Indian Heracliteans, but no Indian Hegelians (though Rāmānuja has been wrongly supposed to be one). History is basically history of man. History of man again is history of human consciousness. Recognition of the historicity of consciousness is the necessary and sufficient condition of a philosophical concern for history. Now, in general, for Indian thought consciousness is above change. Change is relegated by the Vedānta to the domain of *anātma*, to *Prakṛti*. The self, Ātman, is beyond time and change. The process of moving from a state of bondage to a state of liberation is either only a pseudo-process (as in Advaita Vedānta) or, if a genuine process, then surely not a new achievement. And, in any case, it is not an achievement for mankind in general. The idea of the historicity of consciousness is inconsistent with an essentialist notion of man. Where, as in Buddhism, the concept of process is extended to consciousness, the process is conceived on the analogy of outer change, the Heraclitean flow: with *Nirvāṇa* the flow is asserted and transcended. *Nirvāṇa* is beyond history, and cannot be conceived of as an achievement of history within history. The cycle of rebirth is trans-historical.

II

In the foregoing section, an attempt was made to identify and to evaluate some of those traits of Indian philosophical thinking which are either responsible for, or correlates of, the lack of a serious philosophical concern for history. In doing this, our purpose has been not to find out certain pervasive characters of Indian thought but to utilize this ideological phenomenon in order to be able to discover those conceptual conditions which are necessary for a

genuine philosophy of history. In other words, we have wanted to use the case of Indian philosophy as a suitable illustration (one could also take the case of Greek philosophy), and have asked: 'What philosophical concepts were lacking there which may be able to account for the absence of philosophy of history?' Or' 'What philosophical concepts so determine Indian thought that they render a philosophical concern for history impossible?' If we find appropriate answers to these questions, we shall be on our way towards answering a more generalized question: what are the necessary and sufficient conditions required for a genuine philosophy of history?

Making use of our foregoing discussion we may lay down the following as constituting the necessary and sufficient conditions of the possibility of a meaningful philosophy of history: (a) Time should be accorded ontological reality. (b) Both naturalism and absolutism, both reduction of man to nature and dissolution of man in the absolute have to go. (c) Both absolute freedom and total determinism have to be rejected. (d) An essentialist notion of *self* has to be rejected, and replaced by the conception of an essential temporality of consciousness.

Of these, (a) and (d) should be considered together. The time whose reality is relevant here is not just the physical time in which natural events and human experiences take place. What is needed is the conception of historical time as distinguished from physical time, and whatever else may go into the notion of historical time, surely the notion of the temporality of consciousness is an essential ingredient of it. The temporality of consciousness is not just consciousness's being in time in the same way as any other natural event is in it. It is rather the fact that consciousness is time itself, that every conscious state carries with it the original, further unanalysable and irreducible temporal significations of past, present and future in one. For an account of this temporality of consciousness reference may be made to Husserl's phenomenology of internal time-consciousness[3] and Heideger's *Sein und Zeīt*. But such a theory of consciousness would also entail a rejection of that essentialist notion of self (*ātman*) which is almost a pervasive feature of Indian thought. For temporality should be required to characterize not empirical consciousness alone, but also transcendental consciousness. In fact, empirical consciousness, as the consciousness belonging to this man here and now, may be located—via my body with which it is inalien-

ably connected—in the cosmic, physical time. But even if I bracket the empirical adjuncts of my consciousness, even if I overlook the fact that it is my consciousness tied to this psycho-physical organism, the phenomenological residuum, i.e. consciousness as such, though not any longer locatable in physical time, is yet characterized by original temporality in the sense elaborated by Husserl. An essential temporality of the *ātman* is a necessary presupposition of a serious philosophical concern for history. Neither naturalism nor absolutism can satisfy these requirements: the former would locate consciousness within physical time, the latter would raise it above time. Likewise. a philosophy of absolute freeedom will raise consciousness wholly above time, just as a total determinism will place it within nature. History to be meaningful requires a *via media*; it requires that consciousness, essentially temporal, creates values freely but yet within a given objective situation. If consciousness were wholly determined by nature, there would be a natural process of greater complexity but no history. If consciousness were wholly free and so above time, there would equally well be no history.

III

History is history of man. There is no history of nature, nor is there history of the absolute. The former would be a physical process, the latter a concatenation of bloodless categories. History of man is history of consciousness. To speak of the history of an institution (say, of the British Parliament), of art, of diplomacy etc. is legitimate only in so far as these embody, objectify or express human consciousness. If history be history of consciousness, and if consciousness be essentially transparent (*svayamprakāśa*), then history of consciousness would also be consciousness of history. This however does not seem to be so. History and consciousness of history do not coincide. That they do not coincide only gives the lie to the theory that consciousness is all transparent. If on the other hand consciousness were all opaque, it would be *in* time as much as any other thing is but would not be temporal in that specific sense in which its being so is a necessary presupposition of history. Thus though all history is history of consciousness and also to some extent consciousness of history, it is not always explicity and fully so. For though consciousness is never fully opaque, it is also never completely transparent.

But is consciousness wholly and entirely temporal? Does its historicity exhaust its being? Here, I think, Indian thought yields the deep insight that the life of consciousness has also an aspect of being beyond time. This would be evident from the fact that consciousness may stand and reflect on its own historicity, on its own involvedness. Now it may be contended that this reflection itself belongs to the process reflected upon and that consequently reflection does not raise consciousness above time and history. This contention is only partially true. I have elsewhere[4] distinguished between two kinds of reflection. One kind of reflection which we may call *reflection*$_1$ consists in critical thinking, interpretative constructions, speculative synthesis, etc. This kind of reflection is surely historically oriented. It seeks to interpret history, but the interpretations themselves belong to history. But there is another kind of reflection—let us call it *reflection*$_2$—which does not construct systems but reveals phenomena, or rather lets phenomena show themselves. It is in this latter kind of reflection that consciousness comes to its own as supra-historical, as *überzeitlich*, as what Indian philosophers have called the *sākṣi-caitanya*.

Thus consciousness has both dimensions—a historical dimension and a supra-historical dimension. A philosophy of history needs both. Modern phenomenology sees only the former aspect: the temporality and historicity of consciousness. Indian thought saw the latter. Neither is adequate in itself. Each of the two needs the other.

One may pursue this line of enquiry further. The consciousness which is temporal and so historical is the *intentional* consciousness. In fact, its temporality and its intentionality are but two aspects of the same phenomenon. The consciousness which is supra-historical is the transparent, self-illuminating consciousness. The precise relation between the concepts of intentionality and transparence is pertinent here and has been discussed by me elsewhere.[5] As Heidegger has argued,[6] neither a thing (*e.g.* a furniture or a copperplate) nor a world-less subject may truly be said to be historical. True history is neither the movement or change of natural objects, nor a series of experiences of a monad-like subject. It is only the intentional consciousness, the consciousness which is in the world, which is truly historical. The world, too, is historical as the world of consciousness. A furniture is historical in so far as the world to which it belongs and the consciousness whose world it was is past.[7]

My fundamental agreement with Heidegger in this point would imply that my earlier statement to the effect that true history is history of consciousness should *not* be construed as a variety of the idealist philosophy of history. My divergence from idealism concerns the latter's concept of consciousness as non-intentional. The modern thesis of intentionality which emphasizes that consciousness is essentially directed towards an other and so is an openness towards the world such that without it it is nothing, seems to me fundamentally right (except in so far as I have recognized another dimension of consciousness as self-illuminating *to some degree* or other) and helps us to steer clear of a one-sided idealism and dogmatic realism. (It also saves us in epistemology from an unstable representationism.) The notions of historicity of consciousness and historicity of the world are then inseparable correlates. But the world which is historical is no more the world of natural science than the consciousness which is historical is the pure world-less subject. Consciousness then in its historical dimension is worldly. In its supra-historical dimension it is just self-illuminating (*prakāśaekarasa*).

Such a conception of history would entail rejection as much of a naturalistic scientific *Verdinglichung* of the historical process as of a Hegelian conception of history as having absolute rational significance. Here is a profound insight around which Marxism and Existentialism *tend* to converge. History is neither a meaningless process of change, nor is it totally meaningful in the sense of moving towards an absolutely posited goal (divine purpose, classless society, etc). It has an essential ambiguity. As a phenomenon it has an essential *anirvacanīyatva*. Philosophical reflection (in the sense of reflection) tends to rid it of this ambiguity, and to show it either totally meaningless or as fully meaningful. Its essential ambiguity is revealed only to reflection.[8]

NOTES

1. The Paurāṇikas are supposed to have regarded *aitihya* or tradition as an independent source of knowledge. This would come nearest to a recognition of historical knowledge as being *sui generis*.

2. Hiriyanna, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, (London: 7th Impreession, 1968), p. 367.
3. Husserl, E. 'Vorlessungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeritbewusstseins', edited by M. Heidegger) in: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*, Vol. IX, 1928.
4. Mohanty, J.N. 'On Philosophical Description', in Bhattacharyya, K., editor, *Philosophical Papers*, First Series, Santiniketan, 1969.
5. See my forthcoming book *The Concept of Intentionality* (St. Louis: Warren Green, 1970).
6. Heidegger, M. *Sein und Zeit* (Túbingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 7th edition, 1953), p. 388.
7. Ibid., p. 380.
8. Compare Ricœur, P. *History and Truth*, English translation by Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965). Ricœur's views on history have influenced mine in some important respects.

26

Are Indian and Western Philosophy radically different?

Two things A and B are *radically* different ∅s, not merely if they are different ∅s but if they are *as ∅s* different. John and Smith are different men, they are different instances of the generic concept 'man'. But they are not as men different. That is only so, when ∅ is not a generic concept, but what the scholastics called an analogical concept. Aristotle recognized that when 'being' is predicated of God and of creatures, of individual substances and of properties and universals, of relations and numbers, the very meaning of 'being' changes, so that these are not beings in the same way as Socrates and Plato were Greeks, they are beings in radically different senses. 'Being', some schoslatics held, is an analogical concept (not equivocal, to be sure). In our times, Heidegger asked: is there any unitary meaning of 'being' which makes possible these many senses Aristotle spoke of?

Let us ask a similar question about 'philosophy' itself.

I

I will begin by recalling three responses to such a question—one more well-known than the other two, all three, in a sense, seemingly leading up to the same conclusion, but, as a matter of fact, having very different implications and intentions. In his Vienna Lecture of 1935, entitled 'Philosophy and the Crisis of Humanity', Husserl wrote:

'Today we have a plethora of works about Indian philosophy, Chinese philosophy, etc., in which these are placed on a plane with Greek philosophy and are taken as merely different historical forms under one and the same idea of culture. Naturally, common features are not lacking. Nevertheless, one must not allow the merely morpho-

logically general features to hide the intentional depths so that one becomes blind to the most essential differences of principle'. Husserl then continues to emphasize what he consider these differences to consist in. I quote from him again at length:

> In both cases one may notice a world-encompassing interest that leads on both sides—thus also in Indian, Chinese, and similar 'philosophies'—to universal knowledge of the world, everywhere working itself out as a vocation-like life-interest, leading through understandable motivations to vocational communities in which the general results are propagated or develop from generation to generation. But only in the Greeks do we have a universal ('cosmological') life-interest in the essentially new form of a purely 'theoretical' attitude.... and the corresponding, essentially new [community] of philosophies, of scientists (mathematicians, astronomies etc.). These are the men who, not in isolation but with one another and for one another, i.e. in interpersonally bound communal work, strive for and bring about *theoria* and nothing but *theoria*.

Husserl concludes 'The theoretical attitude has its historical origin in the Greeks.' What about Indian thought? It represents the religious—mythical attitude which:

> exists when the world as a totality becomes thematic, but in a practical way; by 'world' we mean here, of course, the world which is concretely, traditionally valid for the civilization in question (a nation, for example), i.e. the world as apperceived mythically.

The interest in this world is practical, 'meant to serve man in his human purposes so that he may order his wordly life in the happiest possible way and shield it from disease, from every sort of evil fate, from disaster and death'.

The theoretical attitude, as contrasted with this mythical–practical attitude, is characterized by: (a) a turning away (*epoche*) from all practical interests, (b) the thinker's becoming a disinterested, non-participating spectator of the world, (c) an awareness of the contrast between world-representation and the actual world, (d) a search for truth that is valid for all, (e) subjecting all truth-claims, even one's own tradition, to universally binding critical norms, and

(f) undertaking and disseminating, through education, both an infinite task of achieving the truth, and the progressive though endless pursuit of this task. In the absence of these characteristics, Husserl concludes: 'It is a mistake, a falsification of their sense, for those raised in the scientific ways of thinking created in Greece and developed in the modern period to speak of Indian and Chinese philosophy and science (astronomy, mathematics), i.e. to interpret India, Babylonia, China, in a Europeon way'.

The pre-judgement underlying this reading of Indian thought is only too obvious to need great scholarly efforts in order to be retrieved. It is indeed true that *a certain* practical interest motivated much of the recorded Indian thought—not the finite interest of shielding life from disease and all evil fate, disaster and death as Husserl would have it here, but *the infinite interest* of freedom from what came to be perceived as the fetters of mundane existence with its 'chain' or rebirth—in other words, the goal of 'liberation'. But it is no less true that philosophical knowledge, in Socratic thinking, was regarded as the means to a good life. It is only we moderns who have divorced theory from practice, and have ascribed that separation, and consequent purity of theory, to the Greeks (and have learned to deny it to the Indians). The other claim that the one sort of thinking was theoretical, the other mythical, is equally off the mark. Platonic thinking as such moved within the mythical, as did the Upaniṣadic—in both cases, myths provided the context as well as the content of thinking; in both traditions thought freed itself from the mythical only in stages, as a historical process. In both—as Husserl noted only in the case of the western tradition, 'what is traditionally valid is either completely discarded, or its content is taken over philosophically and thereby formed anew in the spirit of philosophical ideality'. A glaring example of this is the history of the concepts of *Brahman* and *Ātman*. This is not to say that Indian thought did not follow its own unique path, just as to say that it followed its own unique destiny is not to imply that it did not raise, in its own unique manner, those *critical* questions of validity, grounding and evidence which, according to Husserl, constitute the hallmark of geniune philosophizing. Within the first two centuries of the Christian era, the theories of *pramāṇa* had raised precisely those questions, and institutionalized that inquiry.

Husserl's judgement is the result of an inadequate factual knowledge,

combined with a too hasty 'theoretical' interpretation of the concept of *theoria*, and the all-too-common (in nineteenth century Europe) romantic view of the Oriental mode of thinking. But Husserl's judgement does not presuppose that relativism with regards to 'reason' which arrives at a conclusion similar to his on entirely a priori grounds. For a good example of this, let me now turn to a thesis forcefully presented by Richard Rorty.

II

The points leading up to this thesis are: (i) what has to be known as 'philosophy' in the West—the works e.g. of Aristotle, Hume, Husserl, Heidegger and Quine—has come to be what it is today by self-consciously and successfully distinguishing itself from theology, natural science and literature; (ii) modern western philosophy is the result of a number of cultural accidents including the departmental structure of the universities; (iii) that neither (i) nor (ii) is true of the so-called Indian philosophies, they had not only quite different histories, they had quite different sorts of histories; (iv) any comparison between the two traditions, or between any one picked from the one (e.g. Śaṁkara) and one picked from the other (e.g. Bradley) would be (a) to impose one's own favored conceptual scheme on them (b) to overlook the purposes/needs of those authors, and (c) to attribute common needs to them by 'a feat of imaginative recontextualization'. Consequently, (v) 'comparative philosophy' (not unlike 'comparative literature') is a misleading and pointless discipline. Consequently, (vi) what Uddyotakara, Digṅāga Nāgārjuna, Śaṁkara and Gadādhara were doing should not be called 'philosophy' (call it by some other name, if you will, in spite of the intellectual maturity and vigor of their work).

This carefully crafted and persuasively narrated story, in my view, does not succeed in making the case, and completely fails as an argument. First, as regards the allegedly different history and the allegedly different institutional set up: the 'philosophy' departments in the West go back to the philosophy faculties of the medieval European universities, and no further back than the seminaries of the twelfth century. The Sanskrit intellectual tradition had already by then classified intellectual disciplines into *trayī, vārtā* and *ānvīkṣikī* and *daṇḍaniti*. It is also well known, after listing these disciplines

Kauṭilya in his *Arthaśāstra* continues: '*Ānvīkṣikī* inquires, with reasons, *hetubhi*, what is right and wrong in *trayī*, what is useful or not in *vārtā*, and what is proper and improper in *daṇḍanīti*, and the strengths and weaknesses of these three'. It is the 'source of light of all sciences, the instrument of all actions, and the basis, the foundation, the *āśraya*, of all *dharmas*.' (I will not enter here into a discussion of what *ānvīkṣikī* is. Wilhelm Halbfass has discussed the texts and the issues in great details. *India & Europe*, N.Y., 1990). Whatever it may be, and I am not so much concerned with what the first users of the term meant by it, but with how the tradition, as it developed, and its practitioners, perceived themselves. They did perceive themselves as providing foundation for the other disciplines, even for *trayī*, the discipline whose subject matter are the three *Vedas*. It is *pramāṇair arthaparīkṣaṇam*, examination by means of *pramāṇas* of all such objects which are known by perception and scriptures. *Ānvīkṣikī*, then, certainly was regarded by its practitioners, and intellectuals alike (by Kauṭilya, e.g.) as foundational with regard to other disciplines.

What does the point about different histories amount to? It seems to be a contingent fact, if fact it is, that the two histories—history of Indian thought and history of western thought—ran their own courses without having anything to do with each other. But of what significance has this lack of connection, in so far as what they were doing is concerned? They may still be doing the same or similar things—if not always or in all respects, certainly sometimes and in some respects. Would the matter change if some historian of ideas made a discovery that there exists a Greek translation of the *Upaniṣads*, or a Sanskrit text on Aristotle going back to the beginning of the Christian era, or that Hume's library contained a translation of Milindapraśṇa (with his inscriptions on the margins), or that Kant did indeed read parts of Śaṁkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* in an as-yet-unknown German translation? Would any such new discovery lead our relativist to revise his view?

Rorty also goes on to speak about 'need'. 'Have Asians had any such needs', he asks, 'which have led western universities to teach Seneca, Ockham, Hume and Husserl in the same department?' And yet he himself concedes that 'Heidegger and Quine, in their professional capacities, felt almost none of the same needs, pursued almost none of the same purposes'. But if then, Heidegger and

Quine would still be doing 'philosophy', why not Heidegger and Śaṁkara—even if neither of the three were responding to exactly the same needs. If 'imaginative recontextualization' is needed to compare Śaṁkara and Bradley, the same is also needed to compare Plato and Heidegger, Husserl and Quine.

Moreover is Hindu mathematics 'mathematics', is Sanskrit grammar, *vyākaraṇa*, grammar? Here Rorty would concede the point of any such comparison, for in these disciplines all are agreed about *the point* of the inquiry. But there would seem to be no such agreed 'point' of philosophy. I do not wish to press the question if there is no such point—but if there is no agreed 'point' as between Digṅāga and Hume, there is no more agreement in this respect between Heidegger and Carnap. All are on the same boat, and the group does not clearly divide into two groups from the perspective of the point of what they were doing.

Rorty, along with Schneewind and Skinner, writes elsewhere: 'The idea of the truth about the past, uncontaminated by present perspectives and concerns...is a romantic ideal of purity which has no relation to any actual inquiry.' Now if that be so, our understanding of both Indian thought and western thought would be contaminated by present perspectives and concerns, and such contamination would not be a fault. Rather this is as it should be, it couldn't be otherwise. That makes the thesis that Indian philosophy is so utterly different from western that we should not call it 'philosophy' incoherent, for we in the west can understand Indian thought only from our perspective, such recontextualization would be not a regrettable prejudice but the very condition of our understanding and so perfectly legitimate. It is indeed sickening to find philosophers argue a thesis about a field about which they know almost next to nothing—and so inevitably using arguments that follow a priori from their methodological premises, expecting that no empirical evidence could show them wrong.

It is only those who know both the traditions from within, who have studied the source material of both, who have learned to think within both traditions—who can judge if what is being done in the two traditions are just about the same.

Philosophers who have never undertaken to translate from one language to another are prone to swear by the thesis of the impossibility of translation. Those who are engaged in translating know how

difficult their project is, and yet also experience the pleasure of approximating towards success, they learn how to avoid the pitfalls, how to make their choices from amongst competing possibilities. They do not become sceptics.

III

Another attempt to keep western thought totally different from non-western thought in general, and that without appeal to any empirical evidence but rather on the basis of large, global non-empirical claims, is made by Heidegger. Heidegger, in an attempt to think about the totality of western thought, characterizes it as *metaphysical* beginning with Plato and culminating in Neitzsche—a tradition which has led, in Heidegger's view to technology as a way of will to power, of objectifying and calculative thinking. To quote a dear lamented friend J.L. Mehta who had a superb understanding of Heidegger :

> Heidegger agrees with Hegel that 'philosophy' is in essence Greek-Western, asserting that there is no other, neither Chinese nor Indian, that the phrase 'Western-European philosophy' is in truth a tautology.

Of course, Heidegger believed that with the end of modernity, philosophy has come to an end—heralding the need for a new kind of thinking that would not be objectifying or metaphysical.

In a conference at Brock University, Canada, when I pointed out, contrary to Heidegger's favorite characterization of western thought as destined to be a metaphysics of subjectivity, that Indian thought since its beginning has been concerned with the twin concepts of *sat* and *cit* (some forms of Vedānta even identifying the two), Gadamer first wondered, then reluctantly conceded, that *cit* should translate to 'consciousness', and, finally suggested that it is only Heidegger who makes us think of western thought in its totality, and thereby makes it possible for the western thinker to envisage the possibility of modes of thinking other than the western.

Mehta draws our attention to Heidegger's view that the East should not interpret its own linguistic and spiritual genius by trying to philosophize in the western manner and through western historically loaded concepts. Mehta rightly recognizes that the Indian tradition was concerned from its early beginnings, with the inadequacy of objectifying, representational thought, but also that the extremes

of subjectivism and objectivism were not foreign to that tradition. Natually, he asks: Is Heidegger's characterization of the western tradition correct? Instead of saying that it won't simply do to draw the line as Heidegger does, Mehta goes on to insist:

> What is important here, it seems to me, is not whether these terms may legitimately be used for the Indian tradition of thought, but to see each tradition in its particularity, that is, in its uniqueness as a historical phenomenon.

In a Heideggerean locution he goes on to ask: 'What lies behind the Indian development, what "destiny of Being"?'

We just cannot accept Heidegger's characterization of western thought tradition. Leaving aside without fundamental criticism his obfuscating talk about 'destiny of Being', one must question his attempt to give a global characterization of western thought in its totality, his own claim to have stepped outside it, as heralding the end of that tradition, his interpretive stance applied erratically that the decisive aspect is the unsaid and the unthought, the claim that modern science and technology are grounded in the philosophical thinking initiated by the Greeks, and so on and so forth.

If western philosophical thought has operated with the subject-object distinction, so has a large segment of Indian thought. If Indian thought in some of its decisive moments, has sought to transcend that distinction (as have Vedānta and Mādhyamika with regard to the *pramāṇa-prameya* structure), so has also western thought (as e.g. in the grand effort, in Hegel's phenomenology, to overcome, through a successive series of 'shapes' of spirit, the subject-object distinction). To be sure, there are deep differences in the motivations and methods in achieving such an overcoming, but it is, in my view far from the truth to say that western thought is objectifying while Indian thought is non-objectifying and non-representational.

For one who finds Heidegger's basic reading of western thought deeply unsatisfactory, his way of drawing the limit has simply to be rejected.

IV

Stereotypes and clichés have long prevailed over writings on eastern thought. When it comes to clichés, the Indian side is no more free

from them, no less guilty of illicit generalization. Writings in English coming out of India abound in claims to the effect that while western thinking is intellectual, logical, discursive (and, even, materialistic), Indian philosophy is intuitive, mystic, experiential and spiritual. It is surprising that these clichés have survived at least a century of intellectual contact with the west, when it should have been clear to scholars on one side having some acquaintance with the other, that these are just not true, that neither is Indian *darśana* based on intuition, nor is western thinking 'materialistic', that the Indian logical theories were no less 'logical', and epistemological theories no less 'analytical' than their counterparts in the western tradition, that the Indian ontological theories no more or no less 'secular' than the western. (For two other such stereotypes, think of the claim that the Indians held a cyclic view of time, as opposed to the linear view of time of the Judeo-Christian west, or the claim that the Indians did not accept the law of non-contradiction).

I have often wondered, how would have Uddyotakara, Vācaspati, Udayana, Dignāga, Ratnakrīti and Gadādhara taken these clichés? What would they have understood when told that their thinking—for they are the Indian philosophers *par excellence*, counterparts of Hume, Kant or Husserl—was fundamentally intuitive, spiritual, mystic? Not unconnected with this question, is the question I ask myself: what is the Sanskrit word that captures these adjectives, especially the word 'spiritual' which abounds in modern Indian discourse? As far as I can see, there were two interests which may be said to be 'spiritual'—making allowance for the fact that the word 'spirit' is deeply Judaeo-Christian. One of these two interests is the *Ātman*, a philosophy whose purpose is to determine the nature of *Ātma* (as distinguished from body) is *ādhyātmika* (whose contrasts are *adhidaivika* and *adhibhautika*). The other, of course, is the notorious instrumentality of thinking for the goal of *mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa*.

I will briefly comment on this last point, as well as on the much abused contrast between 'intellect' and 'intuition', and finally revert to the question, has Indian thought developed a standard of critical rationality?

Let me begin with the concept of 'intuition'. As illustrations of contemporary Hindu self-understanding, let me quote a couple of passages from Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. In his Hibbert Lectures, he writes:

> The Western mind lays great stress on science, logic and humanism.... For the Hindus a system of philosophy is an insight, a *darśana*. It is the vision of truth and not a matter of logical argument and proof.

A little later, in the same context, he continues:

> The acceptance of the authority of the Vedas by the different systems of Hindū thought is an admission that intuitive insight is a greater light in the abstruse problems of philosophy than logical understanding.

It is indeed interesting that in pressing this point about 'intuition', Radhakrishnan discusses a whole list of intuitionists from the west: Bradley, Bergson, Croce, not to speak of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, and Pascal. The only Indian philosopher he discusses, in this context, is Śaṁkara.

Radhakrishnan, however, saw more correctly that that distinction is not to be pressed beyond a point: the distinction was one of degree. There are Indian *tārkikas*, just as there are western intuitionists. Thus Radhakrishnan writes much later :

> Logical method knows no frontiers. The law of contradiction obtains in both East and West. Even in the East no one can hold at the same time the two principles of the reality of God and His unreality. The acceptance of one requires the rejection of the other.

In this connection, I will briefly comment on the following questions: (a) the primacy of the logical in western thought; (b) the primacy of intuition in Indian philosophy; (c) the distinction between 'intellect' and 'intuition'; (d) the role of intuition in philosophy; (e) where really does the difference between western philosophy and Indian philosophy lie?

THE PRIMACY OF THE LOGICAL IN WESTERN THOUGHT

For my purpose here, I need not recall the historical genesis of western logic as a science from the Platonic dialectic. What is important is to bear in mind the role that logic comes to play in theoretical/scientific thinking, and that is best expressed thus: 'Science in the Platonic sense intends to be no longer a merely naive activity prompted by a purely theoretical interest. Every step that it takes, it also demands to justify as genuine, as necessarily valid, according to principles.' In this originally instituted sense of scientificity, there

is the idea of 'justification according to principles', but also the idea of 'logical insight into the validity of each step taken': this inevitably implied the idea of an intellectual *intuition* into each step of one's deduction—an idea that continues until the time of Descartes, eventually to be displaced by Kant. What, however, does determine the large and variegated fortunes of western thought is a theory of *concept* originating with the Socratic striving towards a precise definition. Detached from the idea of intellectual intuition (Descartes' 'clearness and distinctness'), it becomes eventually the Kantian concept as a rule of synthesis—and the intuitive understanding (of Plato and Descartes) becomes the discursive understanding whose performance consists in synthesizing sensible data by a priori or empirical rules. The human mind, in its cognitive enterprises, becomes the constitutive source of the world that it purports to know.

The Platonic idea of scientificity continues through the mathematization of the sciences, and by a parallel development through the mathematization of logic itself.

While thus the logical/deductive reason plays a dominant role in shaping western thought, is it true that the logical reason has an unquestioned primacy? An affirmative answer has to take note of the following historical features: throughout the history of the way the logical activity of understanding was conceived, an intuitive component (insight, evidence, clarity/distinctness, mathematical construction) was a candidate for recognition, so that—as Radhakrishnan often did emphasize—the intellect and intuition were being taken as belonging together. In the second place, there was a continuous attempt to limit the reaches of intellect, on the one hand, by the way sensory experience presents data for the intellect to organize (Kant called *this* 'intuition') and, on the other, by that highly dubious, but never quite gotten rid of claim of 'intellectual intuition'. Kant meant by it one thing when he rejected it; Fichte and Schelling meant by it something else when they reintroduced it. Modern western thinking has been deeply transcendental, returning always to the structure of human subjectivity—and even when this structure was conceived as 'logical' (as with Kant) the return was by a method of *reflection* which—and this was the point Fichte made so obscurely—claimed to bring to clarity what was all along being obscurely lived through. Western

thought thus constantly sought to go beyond logic to the foundations of logic in the structure of subjectivity that itself is only reflectively accessible.

THE PRIMACY OF INTUITION IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Thinking about this is hard, and inevitably goes with thinking about the role of critical thinking in Indian philosophy. A first and inevitable step is asking the simple, but often neglected, question: how is 'intuition' to be translated in Sanskrit, do we have a Sanskrit word for it, do we have a near synonym in the Sanskrit philosophical vocabulary? (The same about 'critical reason' also). For 'intuition', the commonly cited equivalents are: *prajñā, pratibhā, ārṣajñāna, yogipratyakṣa, saṁyagjñāna, anubhava, aparokṣānubhūti.* Of these clearly, *anubhava* or *anubhūti* is used sometimes as a synonym for 'knowledge' that is other than memory, sometimes for cognition other than both memory and inference and *śabda* (i.e. for perception, *pratyakṣa*). What must be said about *anubhūti* such that it would amount to 'intuition'? The two *ārṣajñāna* or *yogipratyakṣa* mean not so much intuition in the sense in which it is of importance in philosophy, as extra-ordinary perception (of things too far or too small or not mediated by sensory apparatus) which only *ṛṣis* or yogis could have. Its objects are by and large things in principle perceptible though not perceptible by any ordinary man under (such and such) ordinary circumstances. (Its object, e.g., is not *Brahman* or *Ātman*). *Pratibhā*, as used in Yogasūtra 3.3 2 means the yogi's ability to know what is in future. *Samādhi* is a state of *being* free, rather than knowing anything. Discriminating knowledge (*vivek-ajñāna*) is the cognition that two things—in this case, the *Puruṣa* and the *Prakṛti*, are different, and such a cognition, obviously, is relational and mediated. In Vedānta, one finds use of *aparokṣānubhūti*: an immediate experience of the identity of *Ātman* and *Brahman*. It certainly comes close to what one may call an intuitive awareness of the truth about the self. This may be taken to be 'higher' intuition of the metaphysical truth. But what role do these concepts play in the *darśanas*? I wish to suggest today that the *darśanas* themselves did not make *use* of these notions. In proving/establishing their respective metaphysical theses, the *darśanas* used the *pramāṇas*, the

pramāṇas were also to demonstrate the possibility of such experience as their theory demanded. To the list of *pramāṇas* belonged one or other of the following: *pratyakṣa, anumāna, śabda, upamāṇa, arthāpatti, anupalabdhdi, sambhava, aitihya.* Where are the intuitive experience and the mystic experience? They are not *pramāṇas*, they are experiences.

To take but one example: the Advaita Vedānta placed at the end of the cognitive process—i.e., after the stages of *śravaṇa* and *manana*, something called contemplation or *nididhyāsana.* In my view, the task of philosophy ends with *manana.* Something else, generally known as *sādhana* brings about that experience which supposedly brings about or itself is *mokṣa. Manana* by itself does not lead to *aparokṣānubhūti*, not to speak of inducing it. Philosophy only demonstrates the possibility of achieving a goal, the *conception* of which—be it noted—is theoretically internal to the system. What I am contending then is this: the Indian philosopher *qua* philosopher no more or no less exercises any intuitive grasp or achieves an intuitive experience than his western counterpart. What he does is no less critical thinking. The *pramāṇas* are the norms of critical assessment.

It is at this point that I wish to respond to a queer sort of truth, possibly a deep truth, rendered stale by being uttered unthinkingly: that the texts of the scriptures, *śabda*, express the spiritual *experiences* of their authors. I have some serious objections to this statement, some of which in my view are also deep truths (I recall Neils Bohr's statement: a deep truth is one whose opposite is also deep!). First of all, I do not think it is right to say that a sentence *expresses* an experience. The utterance of a sentence may have been *occasioned* by the utterer's experience, and may 'point to' or 'announce' such an experience, but what it means, what it expresses, is a thought. I do not in the least wish to deny that there are mystic (for how can I deny that of which I do not know what it is) experiences nor do I wish to belittle their importance. What matters in my present context is that those or other experiences are not what are *expressed* by the sentences of the texts. It is not that people have experiences which they simply express in sentences, but rather that they *interpret* their experiences, in the light of the sentences made available by the tradition. When we interpret the scriptures, we interpret the texts and assign to them meanings. The texts themselves, thereby, acquire an interpretive history.

Let me then summarize: it is an essential component of Indian

culture to believe that it is possible for individuals, given suitable effort, discipline and, perhaps past *karma*, to achieve experiences—intuitive, if that word is to have any sense—that free you from pain of bondage due to the cycle of rebirth, but the philosophies do not make any direct use of such experiences (in fact, they just cannot), nor did the philosophers, *qua* philosophers, have any access to such experiences.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN 'INTELLECT' AND 'INTUITION'

Our thoughts about this distinction are not coherent. Does intellect analyze a given whole into parts, or does it also *synthesize* parts into wholes, or, does it do both? Does intuition grasp an individual in its uniqueness (not as instantiating a universal), or does intuition grasp an undifferentiated whole? Or, does, after all, intuition *grasp* anything (for, does not the metaphor of 'grasping' imply the subject-object distinction), or does it amount to *being identical* with what is allegedly known? Is it, i.e., intuition operative in artistic creation (as well as artistic enjoyment) or also in mathematical proofs, scientific discoveries and theory-building? Also in religious experience and in spiritual self-knowledge? Could all these be intuitions in the same sense, or are there rather radically different senses of 'intuition'? How are these respectable senses connected with the alleged super-normal, extra-sensory perceptions, telepathic and what not, of distant and not-yet-actual events, the sort of intellectual intuition Kant derided in his 'Dreams of a spirit-seer'? Granted all these, one cannot but ask: is philosophical cognition 'intuition' in some other sense? or, rather, is there any need for the philosopher to develop this special sort of intuition? Before returning to this last question, let me cast doubt on a familar way of drawing the distinction i.e., in terms of 'mediacy' and 'immediacy'. Is ordinary sense-perception immediate or mediate. It is not inferential, hence immediate, but it is mediated by the sense-organs (as well as past cognition), hence mediate. Perhaps, one is looking for a cognition that is absolutely unmediated. Is there any such? Please note that I have no qualms about conceding that there are such unmediated *experiences*. What I am at great odds with, is the claim that there are such unmediated cognitions. It is also often said that intuitive knowledge is self-manifesting (*svayamprakāśa*). This must be so in some other sense than the sense in which the issues have been debated in Indian thought,

for both the self-manifesting and the self-validity theories regard all cognitions, including the inferential, as being so.

It must be clear that I do not wish to deny that there is some interesting distinction between intellect and intuition. I wish only to say that the distinction is far from being clearly and coherently drawn. Besides, in some complex manner, the two sorts of cognition must involve each other.

THE ROLE OF INTUITION IN PHILOSOPHY

Granted that in some yet unclear sense, intuitions of various types are operative in pre-philosophical life, it does not follow that philosophy itself, trying to comprehend life and experience in all their modalities, is in need of any special sort of intuition. Philosophy of perception is not perceptual, philosophy of mathematics is not mathematical.

The only view about the role of intuition *in philosophy*—not in religion, art or elsewhere—that I know of, is to be found in Fichte: since Fichte wanted philosophy to be a systematic science, it needed a starting point—which was, for him, the intellectual intuition of the ego of its own activities.

Note that Indian philosophy does not need such an absolute starting point, a *darśana* is not a logically deductive system, the *Ātman-Brahman*, even for Vedānta, is not such an axiomatic first principle.

At the beginning of a *darśana* there is no *intuited* first principle (the etymology of 'seeing' here is misleading). There is rather a point of view *as encapsulated in the texts*. There are texts behind texts.

What about the alleged lack of critical reason in the Indian *darśanas*? A system of philosophy has not merely to put forward a theory of reality, of man and his relation to the world, of experience and cognition, it has also to ground, validate and legitimize its theory. Philosophers have never agreed as to the norms, the criteria and the sources of such validation. In general, western philosophers have, for this purpose, appealed to several such: if empiricists, they have fallen back on sensory experience as the ultimate court of appeal; if rationalists, they have appealed either to logico-mathematical reason, or (as with Descartes, and the German Idealists) to the principle of reflective self-consciousness; or, as with the phenomeno-

logists, to the data of eidetic intuition. The Indian *darśanas*, early in their lives, developed the theory of *pramāṇas* which were both the orginating conditions of true cognition and the normative principles of their validation. There are several interesting features of this theory, to which I have elsewhere drawn attention. There is one particular feature to which I will draw attention now—this is the theory of *śabda* as a *pramāṇa*. It is this particular feature which has been criticized as having excluded from the reaches of the Indian thinker a truly critical spirit. I myself used to think so, and have not been excused by many colleagues in India for the severity with which I attacked the theory of *śabdapramāṇa*. Reading Gadamer's *Truth and Method* made me see that while, in many details, my criticism was valid, I had not perceived the true nature of *śabda vis-à-vis* critical reason. If Gadamer is right, authentic thinking takes place from within a tradition. The theory of *śabdapramāṇa* raises this insight into a self-conscious epistemological theory. But I will not elaborate on this more here.

In the long run, coming from the western intellectual tradition as also from the tradition of indological studies, the crucial question remains: can the chapters, spread out over the Sanskrit texts of the *darśanas*, on perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), sentential understanding (*śābdabodha*), truth (*prāmāṇya*), to name only a few,—can these chapters, topics, disputations, be separated from the *supposedly* fundamentally stereological, theological and ritualistic thinking of that tradition, and be elevated to the status of an intellectual discipline to rank with those of a Plato, Kant or Husserl? I wish to emphasize that not only can they be so separated, but the tradition itself achieved the necessary idealization. It is also true, in my view, that the same process happened in western thought. (Recall the process of secularization that went on even after Descartes. Both Nicolai Hartmann and Heidegger continued to look upon the Kantian 'Transcendental Unity of Apperception', the Hegelian *Geist*, the Fichtean Ego, as but secularized versions of deeply theological notions. Not surprisingly, Heidegger characterized western metaphysics as onto-theological.) Recall Śaṁkara's refusal, at the beginning of his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, to regard the *jñānakaṇḍa* and *karmakaṇḍa* as forming two chapters of the same book, and to sharply separate *jñāna* from *dharma*.

The crucial question is not, are the *darśanas* philosophies? The

latter doubt, when it is verbal and trivial, questions the justification of applying a word, instituted first by the Greeks, to a different tradition. This anxiety, even if justified, is not of much worth if it concerns the *word*, for then the same sort of anxiety would haunt the purist if he hears of Hindu 'mathematics'. The really substantive concern would be not about the word but about the content. Does the Indian *darśana*, by virtue of its subject matter, its concerns, its methodology come under the purview of the word 'philosophy'?

Let us remember, however, that nothing depends upon what you decide. It were as though some Sanskrit pundits in Benares decided not to dignify the philosophies of a Kant or of a Husserl as a *darśana* because they lack some feature that they think a *darśana* properly so-called should have.

I believe, we need to avoid two extreme views in this context: one relativistic, the other essentialistic. The relativist holds that the Indian concepts of philosophy (of 'rationality', 'truth') are not only different, but *radically* different from the western, that they i.e., the Indian and the Western, are not only different philosophies, but are, *as philosophies*, different so much so that one ought not to apply the term 'philosophy' in the Indian context. (Rorty holds some such view I believe; Heidegger would have assented). The essentialist holds that philosophy is a rational enterprise, that rationality has no geographical or cultural variations, that in their essence, stripped of the cultural externalities they come out as the *same sort of* enterprise.

I believe that both are mistaken. The relativist is wrong in arguing, almost a priori, that the two *could not be* generically identical. Show him that a particular thesis or a particular argument or a particular concern in Indian thought is just about the same as one in western, he would say; it is you who have so abstracted the phenomenon under consideration from its context that you have made it appear in that way. In other words, your interpretation has created that semblance of identity. This is an a priori argument, how can you refute it? What is suspicious is that the essentialist also uses a similar argument. Show the essentialist that two nearly identical theses, concepts or concerns differ in important respects, he will respond by saying: those differences are extrinsic, context-sensitive and so inessential elements.

I believe that there are enough similarities between Indian *darśanas*

and the western philosophies to justify translating *darśana* as 'philosophy'—enough differences erupting precisely where similarities first showed themselves to justify talk of *Indian* philosophy. 'Philosophy' is a concrete universal in the Hegelian sense, not as abstract identity. The universality of rational thinking transcends and yet comprehends *local* differences, it lives in and through such differences.

27
The Future of Indian Philosophy

Who can predict the future of philosophy, or of Indian philosophy? Who knows if Indian philosophy in the next decades—or even in the next century—will flourish and grow along new, as yet unpredictable lines, or if it will land on a steady path of decline marked at best by historical, antiquarian researches and at worst by cliches that have long since gone stale? Without playing the role of a diviner of the future, let me simply put before you what I—this philosopher—considers to be important for keeping Indian philosophy alive and in good health. My perspective may not be shared by others, but I cannot help pressing how I perceive the situation to be.

First, we should recognize the obvious. Times have changed since Āchārya Śaṁkara, and we cannot return to the past. These changes affect philosophical thinking unavoidably. Let me draw your attention to some of these changes. The Indian philosopher—there is now a certain equivocation in that description, it applies as well to philosopher who are Indians, or of Indian origin, as to non-Indians who do what we call Indian philosophy—is no longer, with rare exceptions, a *sannyāsi*, or even as a rule a Brahmin. He is more likely to be a college teacher. This change did not come about today, nor did it come about in India alone. (In Europe, this change came about in the second half of the eighteenth century, when philosophy became a vocation, philosophers became Herr Prefessors.) Already the Naiyāyikas in Mithila or Navadwip were householders though still Brahmins, teaching in their schools. For us, in India, something very basic has changed now: we write in English, not in Sanskrit. Writing in English cannot be a simply external change. It has and will continue to deeply alter our mode of thinking. I am poignantly aware of the great but vanishing tradition of pundits, with two of whom I spent years learning. I am afraid, in a few

decades, there will only be a handful of them. This gives rise to the question: who will preserve and disseminate that as yet unbroken tradition of Sanskrit philosophical scholarship? Can we, whose basic training is in colleges and Universities, step into the shoes of those pundits? I shudder to think. I will return to some of these questions a little later. What I want to insist upon now is the fact that the life world of the Indian philosopher has undergone radical transformation—a familiar but important truth and this transformation, not merely of personal life, but also of social, political and institutional lives—cannot but have its imprint on our thinking. Several consequences of this historical situation are worth noting. In the first place, the *darśanas* have been disconnected from the mode of living, the cultural mileau in which they had flourished. This may be interpreted in either of two ways. One may hold that with this distancing we have lost a genuine understanding of the *darśanas*. Or one may hold, as I do, that the relation to life was never as tight as one thinks it to be. Thinking, when great, always goes beyond the life-world. In the second place, a *darśana* is no more for us a seamless whole, so that doctrines and theses can be taken out of a system, and thought. Neither was each *darśana* nor the totality of them ever a monolithic structure. Possibilities of reinterpretation, restructuring, and of introducing new systems were always there. We cannot but exploit these possibilities, these loopholes, these plasticities. Another consequence is this, that we must learn to separate what is living and what is dead in Indian philosophy. We have to bear in mind that a philosophical system, by its very nature, must have components that are historically dated, concerns that are no longer alive, and some other components that are of supra-historical value and relevance. This is as much true of Śaṁkara as of Hegel, as much true of the Vaiśeṣika as of Aristotle. We cannot regard everything that Śaṁkara wrote, every concern that he had, every question that he was asking and trying to answer, to be relevant today. Hegel's concern with phrenology cannot be revived, but again things that he says against phrenology are still valid against the contemporary identity theories. The Vaiśeṣika atomism cannot be revived, but the issue whether the universe developed out of an undifferentiated stuff or by a process of combination of discrete elements perhaps has still some relevance. We cannot revert to the question, whether the universe arose out of fire or out of water,

nor need we take a question such as, whether there are presiding deities for each sense organ, with any seriousness.

But most importantly, it is unavoidable today that any work on Indian philosophy shall relate to western thought. The purist resents this, but he too cannot escape this situation. He detects here a hegemony of political power (of the politics of knowledge), but he fails to recognize that this critique of his resorts to the very same discourse, western discourse, whose intrusion he resents.

When I say 'today', I unavoidably mean 'the global intellectual mileau now' constituted by the totality of material and spiritual, political and cultural, scientific and technological conditions obtaining at present, not in the west alone but certainly in India. Science and technology, political democracy, secularism, and economic egalitarianism are also parts of the Indian scene. There is an 'Europeanization of the earth', to recall Husserl's expression. This Europeanization, understood in the proper sense, holds good as a fact, although its exact limits and significance we still do not understand. I do not want to decide for my present purpose whether we must have to accept it, or whether it is lamentable and should be avoided. That is a large question which I just cannot deal with now. I should not by any means be taken to imply that the Indian philosophical tradition must be re-examined from the western standpoint, restated in a western language, must be made to fit the western discourse. If Indian philosophy is to survive and grow, western philosophy also should be examined from the Indian standpoint. In this regard, my concern may be formulated thus: if a Vācaspati or an Uddyotakara or a Digñāga or a Raghunātha were confronted with the ideas of Aristotle, Aquinas, Russell and Husserl, how would they have gone about responding to them? That is how ideally we, as Indian thinkers, should be responding to western philosophy. We need to define the parameters of that conversation. This is what, for example, the late Badrinath Sukla-ji did in responding to that western idea of a 'proposition' and to the theory of body-mind identity.

Such a critical stance—mutual critique between the west and India—presupposes that there is a common, universal 'rationality' operative in both the thought-worlds. This conception has come under severe fire in our times. Many regard 'rationality' as an ethnocentric notion, and so refuse to use it as a neutral category. Others would relativize that notion to cultures. I consider the former too

hasty and the latter too confused. If the *word* rationality is suspect, let us get rid of it. The point is, that philosophers from the East and the West can converse, try to understand each other's thesis, and the arguments and evidences in support. Truth must then be somewhere in between the two extreme positions: that there is one identical concept of rationality across traditions and that one's favoured concept of rationality is irretrievably culture-bound so that there can be no dialogue across cultures.

With these prefatory remarks, I will give some advice for those who want to further the cause of Indian philosophy. Forgive me for stating these in the form of imperatives.

1. Go back to the Sanskrit texts, let them tell you what Indian thought has been like, let them stimulate your concerns and questionings.
2. Do not waste time telling the west how great Indian philosophy has been. That is of no use—whether for us or for western thought.
3. Discard the clichés that become stale.
4. Nothing can do the job of *thinking* (over which neither the west nor the east has a monopoly.) Thinking is the hardest thing to do. We have had, in this century in India, enough of edifying discourse.
5. Remember that no methodological monism—analytic, phenomenological hermeneutic, or any other—can do justice to the richness and variety of Indian thought.
6. Respect for and wonder at the tradition should not be mistaken for worshipping figures. One must have the courage to say that the great Ācāryas could have been mistaken. But again remember, what matters in philosophy is not what you say, but how you *ground* what you say.
7. Just as western methods can be used to reflect upon the Indian philosophies, to restate, reformulate and defend/criticize/improve upon them, the reverse is also incumbent upon us—to show, namely how Indian thinking casts fresh light upon western thought in precisely similar ways. Let us use western thought as a source of new *pūrvapakṣas*.
8. Remember that no thesis—or at least very few of them—are sacrosanct for Indian thought. What distinguishes Indian philosophy is rather its concerns, questions, goals, style, rhetoric.

Consistently with this, we should strive after hitherto unexplored possibilities, new *darśanas*.

9. We must take each other seriously, be merciless critics of each other. Who were more merciless than the Indian critics?
10. We need to extend the Indian philosophical discourse to the new realities facing the Indian mind: social, political, ethical and legal amongst others.
11. Above all, we should learn to think in self-conscious continuity with that great tradition of the *darśanas*.

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